



Diagnosis

In diagnosing Achilles tendonitis or tendonosis, the surgeon will examine the patient's foot and ankle and evaluate the range of motion and condition of the tendon. The extent of the condition can be further assessed with x-rays, ultrasound, or MRI.

Treatment

Treatment approaches for Achilles tendonitis or tendonosis are selected on the basis of how long the injury has been present and the degree of damage to the tendon.

In the early stage, when there is sudden (acute) inflammation, one or more of the following options may be recommended:

- **Immobilization.** Immobilization may involve the use of a cast or removable walking boot to reduce forces through the Achilles tendon and promote healing.
- **Ice.** To reduce swelling due to inflammation, apply a bag of ice over a thin towel to the affected area for 20 minutes of each waking hour. Do not put ice directly against the skin.
- **Oral medications.** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, may be helpful in reducing the pain and inflammation in the early stage of the condition.
- **Physical therapy.** Physical therapy may include strengthening exercises, soft-tissue massage/mobilization,

gait and running re-education, stretching, and ultrasound therapy.

If non-surgical approaches fail to restore the tendon to its normal condition, surgery may be necessary. The foot and ankle surgeon will select the best procedure to repair the tendon.

Prevention

To prevent Achilles tendonitis or tendonosis from recurring after surgical or non-surgical treatment, the foot and ankle surgeon may recommend strengthening and stretching of the calf muscles through daily exercises. Wearing proper shoes for the foot type and activity is also important in preventing recurrence of the condition. ▲



**American College of
Foot and Ankle Surgeons**

This information has been prepared by the Consumer Education Committee of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, a professional society of 6,000 foot and ankle surgeons. Members of the College are Doctors of Podiatric Medicine who have received additional training through surgical residency programs.

The mission of the College is to promote superior care of foot and ankle surgical patients through education, research and the promotion of the highest professional standards.

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