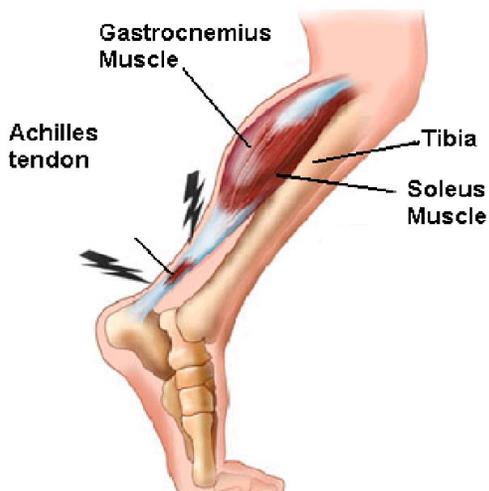
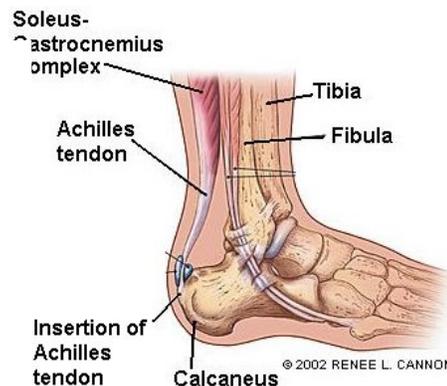


## ACHILLES TENDINOPATHY

The Achilles tendon is a strong, fibrous band that connects the calf muscles (gastrocnemius and soleus) to the heel bone (calcaneus). This is the tendon you feel below the skin at the back of the ankle. When the calf muscles contract, the Achilles tendon exerts a pull on the calcaneus to point the toes downwards. This action helps you stand on your toes, run, jump, walk and go up and down stairs.



An injury to the Achilles tendon occurs when the load applied to the tendon exceeds the ability of the tendon to withstand the force, either in one episode or over time.

A person with Achilles tendinopathy often notices a gradual onset of stiffness or pain. Typically it will be worse for the first few steps in the morning. Often it improves once you are moving around. It may also feel better during exercise but sore for a few hours afterwards. Pain is usually in the area of the tendon, or near the calcaneus.

A more chronic problem may lead to a nodule or area of thick swelling on the tendon.

### PREDISPOSING FACTORS FOR ACHILLES TENDINOPATHY:

Muscle imbalance, over training, excessive hill running, poor fitting footwear, foot pronation, calf weakness

# TREATMENT

Treatment of Achilles Tendinopathy begins with the goal of reducing pain and inflammation.

- Rest the affected area by avoiding activities that cause pain ( eg. Running)
- Ice your Achilles tendon for 10 minutes, two to three times per day.
- If the symptoms don't improve in a few days it is important to get an assessment by a physiotherapist.

Following a proper assessment, your physiotherapist will design a personalized rehabilitation program to reduce pain and inflammation, restore range of motion and strength, and correct any training errors. Your exercise program will include stretches and strengthening for home. When you are ready, your physiotherapist will introduce functional activities and gradual return to running, jumping and your sport to help you return to normal function.

# PREVENTION

Prevention of Achilles tendon damage comes from proper conditioning including adequate warm-ups and cool-downs, gradual progression in training cycles and maintaining strength and flexibility of your calf muscles. Proper footwear is essential as well as monitoring existing footwear for breakdowns which can lead to the problem. Most importantly, if the discomfort continues get the proper advice.