



Suffolk Podiatry

Achilles Tendinopathy

Achilles tendinopathy is a condition that affects the Achilles tendon and can cause pain, stiffness, swelling, and weakness. The Achilles tendon connects the calf muscles to the back of the heel.

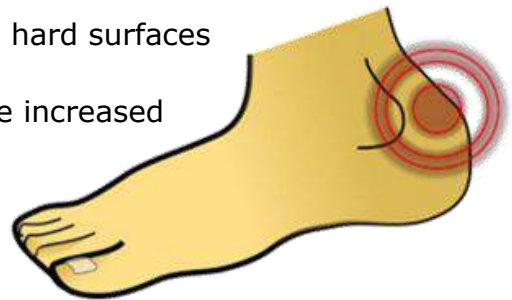
Symptoms are often worse when standing on tiptoe, walking uphill, or climbing stairs.

What causes Achilles Tendinopathy?

Achilles tendinopathy is commonly caused by repeated strain on the tendon over time. This can lead to small areas of damage within the tendon, resulting in pain and reduced function.

Common contributing factors include:

- Repetitive activities, particularly running on hard surfaces such as roads and pavements.
- Carrying extra body weight, which can place increased strain on the feet and ankles.
- Changes in foot posture or movement, such as excessive rolling inwards of the foot (sometimes referred to as “excessive pronation”).
- Inappropriate or unsupportive footwear.



Treatment for Achilles Tendinopathy

Treatment aims to reduce pain and improve the strength and function of the tendon.

Activity Modification: Temporarily reducing activities that aggravate symptoms may help, particularly high-impact activities such as running and jumping.

Ice: Applying ice packs to the painful area for 10–15 minutes may help reduce discomfort, especially after activity. Always wrap ice in a towel and avoid applying it directly to the skin.

Exercises: Specific exercises to strengthen the Achilles tendon and calf muscles are often the most effective treatment. Stretching exercises may also help improve flexibility and reduce tension through the tendon.

Pain Relief: Simple pain relief or anti-inflammatory medication may help manage symptoms. Speak to your pharmacist or GP for advice before taking medication.

Footwear: Supportive, cushioned footwear (such as supportive trainers or running shoes) may help reduce strain on the tendon.

Insoles: Some people may benefit from trying an over-the-counter insole to improve comfort and support.

Lifestyle: Reducing excess pressure on the feet, including through weight management where appropriate, may help improve symptoms. Feel Good Suffolk offers support for a range of lifestyle changes <https://feelgoodsuffolk.co.uk>

Further support

Assessment and treatment are often best provided by a physiotherapist.

You can self-refer to the AHP Suffolk Physiotherapy team via the following website: <https://www.ahpsuffolk.co.uk>

Suffolk Podiatry
Podiatry Hub, Riverside Clinic 2-4 Landseer Rd, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP3 0AZ
www.suffolkfed.org.uk

An NHS service provided by Suffolk GP Federation working with ESNEFT (East Suffolk & North Essex NHS Foundation Trust) in the East, West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust in the West, Suffolk County Council and Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

