

If you discover any problems with your feet, contact your Podiatry Department or GP immediately. If they are not available, go to your nearest accident and emergency department. Remember, any delay in getting advice or treatment when you have a problem can lead to more serious problems.

Individual advice

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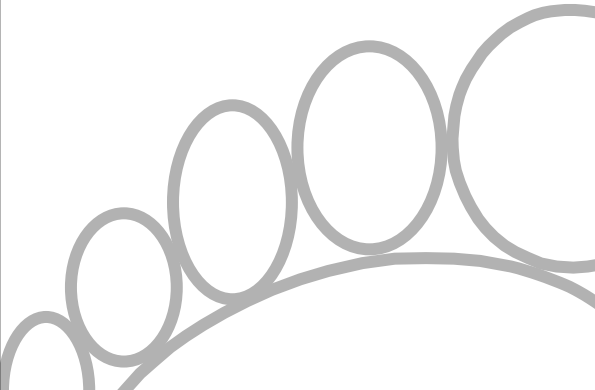
Equality Statement
At South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust we are fully committed to equality and diversity, both as an employer and as a service provider. We have a policy statement in our Equality Strategy that clearly outlines our commitment to equality for service users, patients and staff:
You and your family have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in decisions about your treatment and care. You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. You will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
You have a responsibility to treat other service users, patients and our staff with dignity and respect

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print.

PALS
We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.
You can contact the service by the direct telephone line on 01926 600 054 by email: Pals@swft.nhs.uk or by calling in person to the PALS Office which is located in the Lakin Road Entrance of Warwick Hospital.

SWFT Podiatry Department does not supply sport orthotics, purely for use in sports.

Podiatry Department



Achilles Tendonitis advice leaflet

Name:

NHS No:

Podiatry Single Point of Access
Telephone: 01926 600810
Lines open 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday
E- mail: podiatryreferrals@swft.nhs.uk

Causes

The Achilles is the large tendon connecting the two major calf muscles - the gastrocnemius and soleus - to the back of the heel bone. Under too much stress, the tendon tightens and is forced to work too hard. This causes it to become inflamed (that's tendonitis), and over time, can produce a covering of scar tissue, which is less flexible than the tendon. If the inflamed Achilles continues to be stressed, it can tear or rupture.

Symptoms

Dull or sharp pain anywhere along the back of the tendon, but usually close to the heel. Limited ankle flexibility. Redness or heat over the painful area. A nodule (a lumpy build-up of scar tissue) that can be felt on the tendon. A cracking sound (scar tissue rubbing against the tendon) when the ankle moves. Pain or stiffness especially in the morning or after rest.

How is it caused?

- Increase in activity (either distance, speed or hills).
- Less recovery time between activities.
- Change of footwear or training surface.
- Weak calf muscles.
- Decreased range of motion at the ankle joint, usually caused by tight calf muscles.
- Wearing high heels.
- Altered lower limb biomechanics.

Self Treatment

If you are a runner, stop running! Take aspirin or ibuprofen, and ice the area for 15 to 20 minutes several times a day until the inflammation subsides.

Self-massage may also help "I have every therapeutic machine available for the treatment of Achilles tendonitis and the treatment of choice is massage with a heat—including cream or oil" says Marc Chasnov, a physical therapist in Rye Brook, New York. He suggests rubbing semicircles in all directions away from the knotted tissue three times a day.

A heel raise may be recommended to take the strain off the tendon while it's healing. These are available in most good pharmacy retailers

When can I start running again?

Once the nodule is gone, stretch the calf muscles. Don't start running again until you can do toe raises without pain. Next, move on to a skipping rope, then jumping jacks, and then gradually begin running again. You should be back to easy running in six to eight weeks.

Medical Treatment

If injury doesn't respond to self-treatment in two weeks, see one of the following

1. A sports injury clinic
2. Physiotherapist treatments could be beneficial, by providing specific strengthening exercises, stretching exercises, soft tissue massage and frictions or electrotherapy.

Orthopaedic surgeon. Surgery to scrape scar tissue off the tendon is a last resort, but not very effective. It usually stimulates more scar tissue.

Alternative Exercises

Swimming, pool running and cycling (in low gear)

NO WEIGHT-BEARING EXERCISES

A simple stretch could help reduce the chance of an Achilles problem. The best stretch for the Achilles is also the simplest. Stand on the balls of your feet on stairs, a curb or a low rung of a ladder, with your legs straight. Drop both heels down and hold for a count of 10. To increase the intensity of the stretch, keep one foot flat and lower the other heel. Then switch legs.

Wear motion-control shoes or orthotics to combat over pronation. Don't run in worn-out shoes. Ease into any running program. Avoid hill work. Incorporate rest into your training schedule.