



DynamicHealth



## Ankle Tendon Pain Exercises



Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust: delivering excellence in musculo-skeletal services and pelvic health physiotherapy across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

This booklet has been produced by senior physiotherapists working for DynamicHealth. It offers simple advice and exercises to help you safely manage your ankle problem, often the right advice and exercises are all that is needed. This leaflet has been made available to your GP, who may ask you to try the advice and exercises prior to physiotherapy assistance.

There are two main types of ankle tendon problems:

- Achilles Tendon
- Tibialis Posterior Tendon

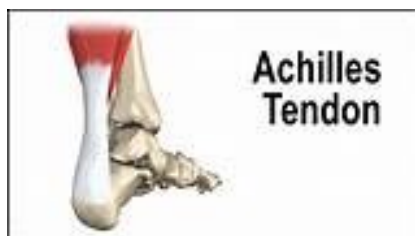
These problems can take a long time to resolve, it can be painful with rest and less painful with activity.

### **Achilles Tendon problems**

The Achilles Tendon connects the large calf muscle to the heel bone. It allows you to point your toes and is particularly important in walking and climbing stairs.

Symptoms:

- Pain directly over the Achilles, tender to touch
- Pain and stiffness on waking, which improves with movement
- Pain on walking, running or stairs
- Pain after activity



## Tibialis Posterior Tendon problems

The Tibialis Posterior is located in the lower leg. The tendon passes down the back of the leg, inside the ankle and under the foot. It is particularly important in walking to maintain the arch of the foot and stop us getting “flat feet.”

Symptoms:

- Pain anywhere tracking the tendon from behind the inner ankle bone to inner aspect of the foot just above the arch
- Pain replicated on single stance heel lift.
- Pain worsens with activity involving repeated flexion of foot.



## Top 5 Tips for tendon pain

1. Try an ice pack on the tendon for 10 minutes (wrap it in a damp towel to avoid an ice burn). This can be done regularly for the duration of the pain.
2. Take pain relief recommended from your GP.
3. Consider insoles to support the arch of your foot.
4. Wear appropriate supportive footwear with good arch support that is secure around the heel.
5. Activity modification, regular gentle activity can help to ease the pain. Avoid excessive repetitive stress such as running.

**Do not use ice on your ankle if you have poor sensation over the area, and infected wound, Raynauds Syndrome, or Cryoglobulinaemia.**

## Exercise programme

Please complete exercises A and B everyday for the next 12 weeks, alongside Phase 1.



### A) Pushing toes into wall

1. Long sitting with arm support. Feet resting against a wall.
2. Push your toes into the wall, as if to try and push the wall away. Feel the muscles of your calf tightening. Hold for approx 10 secs.
3. Repeat 10 times.



### B) Pushing inside of feet together

1. Sit on a chair or on the floor. Put the inner borders of your big toes together.
2. Press the inner borders of your big toes together.
3. Hold for approx 10 secs.
4. Repeat 10 times

Continue with activities of daily life and exercising, as long as the pain whilst doing these activities, is only mild to moderate.

It may be helpful in this phase to ice the tendon for 20 minutes, once a day.

Anti-inflammatory medication may also be helpful at this time, please speak to your pharmacist.

The amount of repetitions should be guided by your pain. As long as the pain is mild to moderate, you are fine to keep exercises (it is not harmful to your tendon).

## Phase 1, Phase 2 or Phase 3:

You will be guided through these phases in the following pages.

### Phase 1



#### A) Two footed heel raise

1. Start by doing as many reps as your symptoms will allow - with a maximum of **15 reps**. Repeat 3 times.
2. Stand with both feet on the floor. Raise onto your toes.
3. Let your heels drop downwards.
4. Push up on your toes and slowly lower back down.
5. Complete exercises once per day.



#### B) Two footed heel raise with lowering on affected foot.

1. Start by doing as many reps as your symptoms will allow - with a maximum of **10 reps**.
2. Standing with both feet on the floor, push up on your toes. Shift your weight to your affected leg, taking your good leg off the floor. Slowly lower back down to the floor .
3. Repeat once a day.



#### C) Single foot heel raise

1. Start by doing as many reps as your symptoms will allow - with a maximum of **10 reps**.
2. Stand on one leg.
3. Push up on your toes and slowly lower.
4. Repeat once a day



#### D) Seated calf raise with weight

1. Start by doing as many reps as your symptoms will allow - with a maximum of **10 reps**.
2. Sit with both feet on the floor. Place a light weight (1-3kg) on your legs. Slowly raise up onto your toes and then return to the floor. (If you do not have weights books or a back pack filled with water bottles can be used as a substitute)
3. Repeat once a day

Once you have completed for two weeks move onto

**Please start Phase 2** (you no longer need to complete exercises in Phase 1.

## **Weeks 2-5**



### **A) Two footed heel raise on step**

1. Start by doing as many reps as your symptoms will allow - with a maximum of **15 reps**. Repeat 3 times.
2. Stand on both feet on a step with both of your heels over the edge. Let your heels drop downwards.
3. Push up on your toes and slowly lower back down.
4. Complete once per day.



### **B) Single foot heel raise on step**

1. Start by doing as many reps as your symptoms will allow - with a maximum of **15 reps**. Repeat 3 times.
2. Stand on one leg on a step with your heel over the edge. Let your heel drop downwards.
3. Push up on your toes.
4. Complete once per day.



### **C) Seated single leg calf raise with weight**

1. Start by doing as many reps as your symptoms will allow - with a maximum of **15 reps**. Repeat 3 times.
2. Sit with your heel of your affected leg over the edge of a step. Place a light weight (1-3kg) on your leg. Raise up onto your toes and slowly lower.
3. Complete once per day.

**Once you have completed for 3 weeks please move onto Phase 3.**

## **Please start Phase 3**

### **Weeks 6-12 weeks**

Continue with exercises in Phase 2.

- Progress exercises by slowly adding weight, (this can be done by wearing a back pack with bottles of water in it).
- For seated calf raises the back pack can be placed on your knees.
- As with previous levels, let your pain guide you.

If your symptoms are still causing your problems, please call the Physio Advice Line on 0300 555 0210.

## **How can I improve my general aerobic fitness?**

In short anything that raises your heart rate.

Two main ways are:

1. Through activity - swimming, walking, cycling, fitness classes etc.
2. By adding a warm up to your strengthening exercises - marching on the spot, and seated marching on the spot.

You can find the latest information on local fitness schemes on our website: <http://www.eoemskservice.nhs.uk/community> or by scanning the QR code.



## For further information about this service contact:

**General Enquiries:** 0300 555 0123

Physiotherapy Dept, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Hinchingsbrooke Park, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 6NT

Physiotherapy Dept, Brookfields Campus, 351 Mill Road, Cambridge, CB1 3DF

Physiotherapy Dept, Princess of Wales Hospital, Lynn Road, Ely, Cambs, CB6 1DN

Physiotherapy Dept, Doddington Hospital, Benwick Road, Doddington, Cambs, PE15 0UG

Physiotherapy Dept, Rowan Lodge, North Cambs Hospital, The Park, Wisbech, Cambs, PE13 3AB

Physiotherapy Dept, City Care Centre, Thorpe Road, Peterborough, PE3 6DB

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