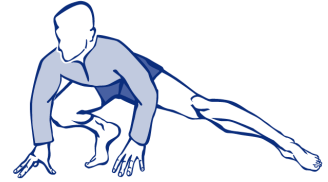




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Treatment of Achilles Tendon Injuries

Many different words are used to describe this condition. It may also be referred to as tendonitis, tendinosis, and tendinopathy. Generally speaking, a chronic degenerative cause is the underlying causative factor, and this occurs slowly, oftentimes over many years. It may not cause pain until the degeneration has become extensive.

The **treatment** is difficult because the tendon is not able to heal on its own. With treatment, our goal is to make the tendon less painful, although the tendon itself remains chronically abnormal.

As long as the tendon is not completely ruptured, the following treatment options may be initiated:

1. **NSAIDs (e.g. naproxen or ibuprofen or Celebrex):** Dr. Carreira recommends short courses of these non-steroidal anti-inflammatories. This medication should be checked with your primary care physician to make sure that it is safe for you.
2. **Activity modification:** If it is painful to do a certain activity, try to limit this activity until the pain has improved and then resume gradually.
3. **Heel lift:** A silicone heel gel inserted into your shoe will lift the heel slightly and offload the tendon. Wearing a shoe with a slight heel will also have the same effect (e.g. a clog). For the insertional type of Achilles injury, a shoe without a heel counter (open back shoe) will decrease pressure on this painful area.
4. **Physical Therapy:** Minimal stretching is recommendable and a program of heavy load eccentric strengthening may be initiated. Dr. Carreira will provide you with a prescription.
5. **Immobilization in a CAM walker:** If these initial treatments have failed, immobilization in this boot is recommendable.
6. **Surgery:** If all else fails, surgery may be performed endoscopically (through small portal incisions) or open. The type of surgery depends on the location within the tendon, the extent of tendon injury, and any associated abnormalities.