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Tendonitis

Achilles Tendonitis



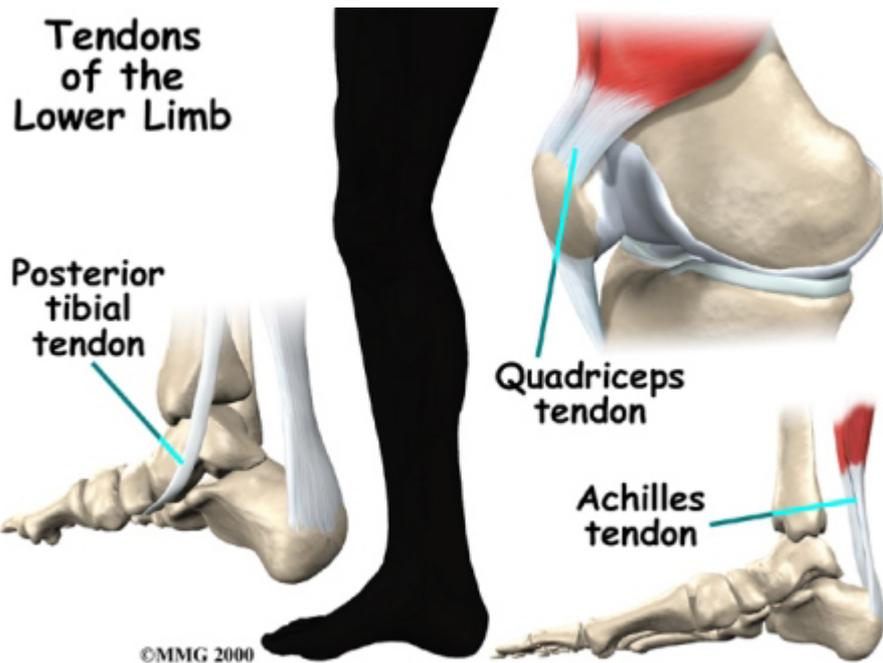
Chronic, or long-term, tendon problems are common. Tendon problems are especially common in people who play certain types of sports.

Tendon problems account for almost 30 percent of all running injuries and 40 percent of all tennis injuries.

Where does tendonitis develop?

Tendons connect muscle to bone. A tendon is made of material called **collagen**. The tendon is wrapped in a thin, slippery covering called the tendon sheath. The tendon sheath allows the tendon to slide easily against the tissues around it.

Many parts of the tendon can be injured. Tendon problems can involve the area where the tendon attaches to the bone, the tissue that surrounds the tendon (the tendon sheath), or the main tissues of the tendon. Doctors use different terms to refer to injuries of different parts of the tendon.



Achilles Tendonitis

The tendon sheath, the tissues of the tendon, and the attachment to the bone can all become injured in the **Achilles tendon**, found in the lower leg.

Damaged Achilles tendons carry a higher risk of rupturing because of the weight they bear while standing and walking.

Posterior Tibial Tendonitis

Tendonitis along the inside edge of the ankle and into the instep of the foot is called **posterior tibial tendonitis**. It is usually caused by age-related degeneration. If this tendon breaks, it can cause the arch of the foot to become flat and painful.

Patellar and Quadriceps Tendonitis

Problems in the **tendons of the knee** occur mostly in people whose exercise involves running or jumping. Patellar tendonitis is also called jumper's knee.

De Quervain's Disease and Trigger Finger

Tendon problems are common in the hand and wrist. **De Quervain's disease** causes pain in the wrist just above the thumb. **Trigger finger** generally causes pain in the palm just below the knuckles, but it eventually causes problems with movement.

Lateral Epicondylitis

Lateral epicondylitis, also called **Tennis elbow**, affects the area where the tendons of the elbow attach to bone on the outside of the elbow. It causes pain when using the wrist and hand.

Medial Epicondylitis

Medial epicondylitis, also called **Golfer's elbow**, affects the area where the tendons of the elbow attach to bone on the inside of the elbow. It causes pain when using the wrist and hand.

Rotator Cuff Tendonitis

Rotator cuff problems of the shoulder range from mild damage to **complete tears**. They can cause pain even when resting.

Why do I have this problem?

The tendon can be injured by the repetitive pounding of running and jumping, or by the stress caused by lifting heavy loads over and over again. Tendonitis usually builds up over weeks or months.

The improved design of athletic shoes over the past few decades seems to have decreased tendon injuries.

Many factors can work together to cause tendonitis. For instance, a woman in her forties who takes up running may have tendonitis caused jointly by the degeneration of aging and the mechanical stress of running.

What does tendonitis feel like?

Tendonitis causes pain.

The affected tendons are sometimes swollen

Pain when you first get up in the morning.

Tendon problems cause crepitus, a crackling feeling when the joint moves.

The weakened tendon may actually **rupture**, or break, with a sudden force.

How do doctors identify tendonitis?

Detailed medical history, your activities, your job, and your symptoms.

Your doctor will also physically examine the sore area.

It is important for your doctor to know exactly where it hurts.

X-rays do not usually show tendon damage. : to rule out other problems.

A magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan to look at the tendons. This test shows the tendons and other soft tissues of the body. It can show the damage in the material that makes up the tendon.

What can be done for the problem?

Tendon problems can be difficult to treat effectively. They can last for many months to several years, even with treatment.

You should expect your treatment to take from six to nine months. Even if treatment is effective, your pain may come back

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as aspirin and ibuprofen, to help control the inflammation and pain. NSAIDs are usually used for a short time with tendon problems

If nothing helps relieve the pain, corticosteroid injections around the tendon are sometimes used.

Your doctor may refer you to a physical or occupational therapist. A therapist will teach you stretches and exercises to help your tendon heal and regain its strength.

Most people with chronic tendon problems can find ways to relieve the pain and take part in their normal activities, even if the problem doesn't completely go away.

Surgery can be very successful in relieving the pain of chronic tendonitis.