Understanding Achilles tendon pain

The role of activity, progressive loading, education and clinical assessment.

Typical presentation

Midportion Achilles tendinopathy can cause pain and stiffness during walking, running and jumping. It must be differentiated from acute rupture or insertional problems.

Core principles

The 2024 guideline advises education and progressive tendon-loading exercise, adjusted to patient tolerance. Complete rest is generally not recommended.

Progress should be reviewed over time and based on meaningful activity goals rather than scan appearance alone.

When to seek urgent advice

Sudden popping, marked weakness or inability to push off after injury needs urgent assessment for a possible tear or rupture.

Questions for the clinician

Is my problem midportion or insertional? What activities can I safely maintain? How should the rehabilitation plan be progressed?

Research sources

Chimenti, R.L., Neville, C., Houck, J., Cuddeford, T., Carreira, D. and Martin, R.L. (2024) ‘Achilles pain, stiffness, and muscle power deficits: Midportion Achilles tendinopathy revision 2024’, *Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy*, 54(12), pp. CPG1–CPG32. doi:10.2519/jospt.2024.0302. https://doi.org/10.2519/jospt.2024.0302

General information only. Seek clinical advice for new or urgent symptoms.