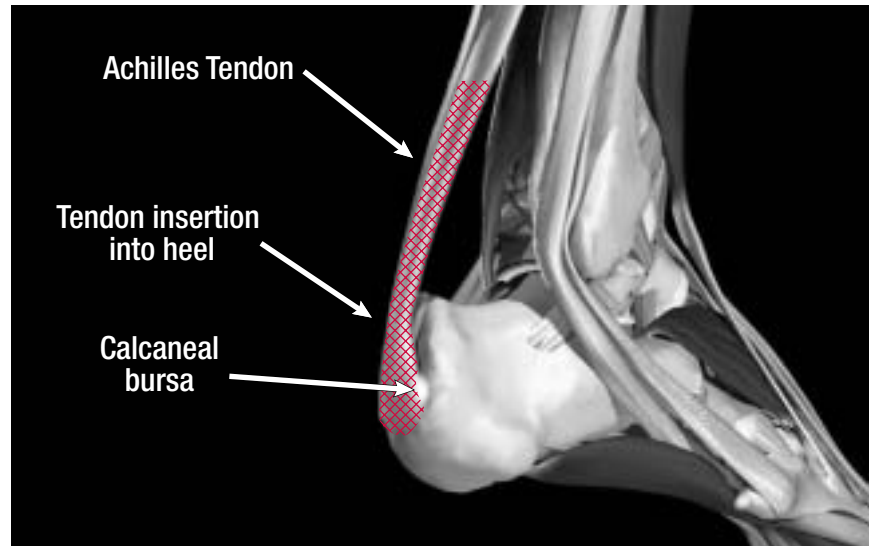


Achilles Tendonitis



Surface anatomy of the achilles tendon on a right leg



The achilles tendon connects the calf musculature (gastrocnemius and soleus) to the heel (calcaneus). Achilles tendonitis is inflammation of this tendon and/or the tissues surrounding the tendon. This condition is usually a result of repetitive stress being placed on the tendon.

Signs/Symptoms

- Tenderness 1-2 inches above the insertion of the achilles tendon into the heel
- Swelling or thickening of the tendon may or not be present

- Pain or stiffness may be present when one gets out of bed in the morning
- Pain/stiffness at the beginning of activity and decreasing during activity. Pain may be constant in advanced cases

Causes

- Sudden increases in activities or training (running mileage)
- An excessive amount of hill running or excessive sprint workouts
- Running shoes with poor flexibility or a stiff heel counter
- Running on uneven or banked surfaces
- Tight calf or hamstring muscles
- Biomechanical problems including excessive pronation, cavus foot (high arch) and/or tibia vara (bowlegs)

Treatment

- Modify activity; decrease running mileage, hill workouts and speed workouts
- Apply moist heat, if possible, before activity
- Ice the tender area 15-20 minutes after activity
- Light calf and hamstring stretching
- Orthotics for biomechanical problems, a heel lift or new shoes if needed
- Anti-inflammatory medication as prescribed by a physician