Chichester PHYSIO LTD

7 EXPERT TIPS FOR MANAGING ACHILLES TENDONITIS EFFECTIVELY



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ABOUT LINDY GRIFFITHS OF CHICHESTER PHYSIO

Lindy Griffiths is the founder of Chichester Physio and an experienced physiotherapist specialising in musculoskeletal care. She supports patients with back and neck pain, sports injuries, joint problems and rehabilitation after surgery. Lindy and the team combine careful assessment, hands-on treatment, tailored exercise and clear advice to help people improve movement and return to everyday activities. Every patient receives an individual plan based on their symptoms, goals and circumstances. Lindy is passionate about helping patients understand their condition, build confidence and make sustainable progress.

approach, she empowers individuals to take control of their recovery and continue living life to the fullest.

INTRODUCTION

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Achilles tendon pain can make ordinary activities - from those first steps in the morning to walking, running and climbing stairs - uncomfortable. This guide shares seven practical ways to manage symptoms and support recovery.

Achilles tendinopathy is often related to how the tendon responds to load. Recovery usually involves adjusting activities and gradually rebuilding strength, rather than relying on rest alone. The right approach will depend on your symptoms and whether the problem is in the middle of the tendon or close to the heel bone.

Try the ideas that are comfortable for you, and avoid forcing exercises that make symptoms substantially worse. Some people benefit from professional assessment before starting a strengthening programme.

The seven sections ahead explain the foundations of a sensible recovery plan - and when additional treatment may be considered.

Keep reading below...

7 EXPERT TIPS FOR MANAGING ACHILLES TENDONITIS EFFECTIVELY

1. Recognise Early Stiffness or Pain

Stiffness on getting out of bed, tenderness around the Achilles tendon and pain after exercise can be signs of Achilles tendinopathy. The symptoms may fluctuate, particularly when your activity levels change.

What to do:
- Notice when pain occurs and which activities aggravate it.
- Temporarily reduce running, jumping or hill work if symptoms flare up.
- Keep moving within a comfortable level instead of stopping everything.
- Arrange a physiotherapy assessment if the pain persists or limits walking.

Seek urgent assessment if you feel a sudden snap or pop, develop marked weakness, or cannot push off the affected foot: these may indicate a tendon rupture.

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2. Keep Moving - Adjust the Load

Complete rest is rarely the best long-term approach for Achilles tendinopathy. Tendons generally benefit from an appropriate, progressive loading programme, while aggravating activity may need to be reduced for a time.

What to do:
- Modify high-impact exercise while the tendon is particularly sore.
- Consider lower-impact activities such as swimming or cycling if comfortable.
- Keep up tolerable walking and day-to-day movement.
- Gradually increase activity as symptoms and function improve.

Some discomfort during rehabilitation may be acceptable, but increasing pain or stiffness the following morning suggests the load may need adjusting.



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3. Build Strength Gradually

Calf strengthening is a key part of Achilles tendinopathy rehabilitation. Both slow heel raises and other progressive resistance exercises may be helpful; no single exercise is ideal for every patient.

What to do:
- Begin with heel raises on level ground if these are comfortable.
- Progress resistance and repetitions gradually under guidance.
- Include bent-knee and straight-knee calf work when appropriate.
- Monitor soreness during exercise and the following morning.

Important: if pain is at the insertion of the tendon into the heel, lowering the heel below the level of a step may aggravate symptoms. Get individual advice before attempting deep heel drops.



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4. Check Calf Mobility

Restricted calf or ankle movement can sometimes contribute to discomfort, but stretching does not suit everyone with Achilles pain. In particular, strong stretches may aggravate pain close to the heel insertion.

What to do:
- Try gentle ankle movements within a comfortable range.
- Use a light calf stretch only if it does not aggravate symptoms.
- Avoid bouncing or forcing the heel into a painful position.
- Ask your physiotherapist whether stretching is useful for your type of tendon pain.

Strengthening and gradual return to activity are generally more central to rehabilitation than stretching alone.



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5. Consider Your Footwear

Shoes can affect how much load is placed on your Achilles tendon. During a painful period, some people find that cushioning and a modest heel height are more comfortable than very flat footwear.

What to do:
- Choose comfortable footwear suited to your activities.
- Avoid suddenly changing to minimalist shoes while symptomatic.
- Ask a clinician whether a temporary heel lift may be appropriate.
- Return to your usual footwear gradually as symptoms settle.

There is no single shoe that prevents Achilles problems. Comfort, loading and your individual needs matter more than a universal footwear rule.



6. Look at the Bigger Picture

Achilles pain often develops in the context of changes in training, activity or recovery. Calf capacity, ankle movement, other injuries and general health may also influence how you respond to rehabilitation.

What to do:
- Review any recent increases in distance, speed, hills or jumping.
- Discuss previous injuries and medication history with your clinician.
- Consider calf strength, balance and other relevant movement factors.
- Follow an individual plan rather than trying to correct every aspect of your gait.

A thorough physiotherapy assessment helps identify the factors that are relevant to you and decide where to focus treatment.

7. Know When to Seek Additional Treatment

Achilles tendinopathy often improves gradually over weeks or months with an appropriate progressive loading programme. Some persistent cases may benefit from additional treatment alongside exercise.

At Chichester Physio, we also offer radial Shockwave Therapy (extracorporeal shockwave therapy, or ESWT).

Shockwave may be considered for selected patients with persistent Achilles tendinopathy after a clinical assessment. Evidence is mixed, and outcomes vary; it is not a guaranteed cure or a replacement for strengthening and load management.

Your physiotherapist can discuss whether Shockwave Therapy is suitable for the location and nature of your symptoms, explain potential discomfort and precautions, and help plan a gradual return to activity.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

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If Achilles pain is affecting walking, work or sport, a personalised assessment can help clarify the nature of the problem and guide recovery. Achilles tendinopathy does not respond to a single universal exercise or treatment.

At Chichester Physio, we start by listening to your symptoms, reviewing your activity levels and examining the calf, ankle and tendon. We then recommend a plan based on your presentation and goals. This may include progressive calf strengthening, activity modification, rehabilitation advice and hands-on treatment to address associated movement problems.

Shockwave Therapy is also available at Chichester Physio. For selected patients with persistent Achilles tendinopathy, it may be considered as an additional treatment alongside a structured exercise programme. Research results vary, so we will explain the potential benefits and limitations rather than promise a particular outcome.

If you have insertional Achilles pain, a suspected tendon tear or another condition affecting the heel, the treatment approach may need to be different. A proper assessment is important before beginning intensive exercises or Shockwave Therapy.

Our aim is to help you understand the problem, build confidence in your recovery and return to the activities that matter to you. To discuss your symptoms, call Chichester Physio on 01243 783040.

CONCLUSION

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You have now explored seven practical steps towards managing Achilles tendon pain: recognising symptoms early, adjusting activity, rebuilding strength, considering mobility and footwear, identifying relevant contributing factors and seeking further help when needed.

Recovery is often gradual. Small, consistent changes may help, but the right approach depends on your symptoms and the part of the tendon involved. A physiotherapist can help you understand which exercises and activities are suitable.

For persistent Achilles tendinopathy, we can also discuss whether Shockwave Therapy might be an appropriate addition to your rehabilitation. It is not suitable for everyone, and we would explain the options after assessing you.

Your Free Discovery Visit

If you would like to talk about your Achilles pain, we invite you to arrange a free Discovery Visit with one of the Chichester Physio physiotherapy team. We will listen to your concerns, explain how we assess and treat Achilles problems and discuss the next steps.

Call 01243 783040 and mention this free Achilles tendon report to arrange your visit.

HEALTH DISCLAIMER

We strive to provide accurate and helpful information regarding pain and injury management in this guide.

However, the examples and advice presented are based on common conditions we see at Chichester Physio and may not apply to every individual. Each person's symptoms, recovery process, and response to treatment can vary due to factors such as medical history, genetics, lifestyle, stress levels, adherence to treatment, and other psychosocial influences.

This guide is not a substitute for professional medical advice. A full assessment and physical examination by a qualified practitioner are necessary to determine the most appropriate treatment for your specific condition. While we provide expert care at Chichester Physio, the recommendations here cannot replace an in-person consultation.

We encourage you to seek professional assessment before beginning any new treatment plan. There is always a risk of further injury if appropriate medical guidance is not followed. No guarantees of specific results are made or implied in this report.

THANK YOU



Thank you for taking the time to read this report. We understand that living with pain can be challenging, and we are here to support you every step of the way. If you would like to learn more about how Chichester Physio can help, we invite you to book a **FREE telephone consultation** with our expert team.

How Do I Book My Free Phone Consultation?

Booking your **FREE telephone consultation** is quick and easy!

Visit our website: chichesterphysio.co.uk
Call us directly: 01243 783040

Our expert team is ready to help you take the first step towards relieving pain and restoring movement. Don't wait—book your consultation today!