

Achilles Tendon: Exercises

Your Care Instructions

Here are some examples of exercises for your Achilles tendon. Start each exercise slowly. Ease off the exercise if you start to have pain. Dr. Caruso or your physical therapist will tell you when you can start these exercises and which ones will work best for you.

How to do the exercises

Toe Stretch



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1. Sit in a chair, and extend your affected leg so that your heel is on the floor.
2. With your hand, reach down and pull your big toe up and back. Pull toward your ankle and away from the floor.
3. Hold the position for at least 15 to 30 seconds.
4. Repeat 2 to 4 times a session, several times a day.

Calf-Plantar Fascia Stretch



1. Sit with your legs extended and knees straight.
2. Place a towel around your foot just under the toes.
3. Hold each end of the towel in each hand, with your hands above your knees.
4. Pull back with the towel so that your foot stretches toward you.
5. Hold the position for at least 15 to 30 seconds.
6. Repeat 2 to 4 times a session, up to 5 sessions a day.

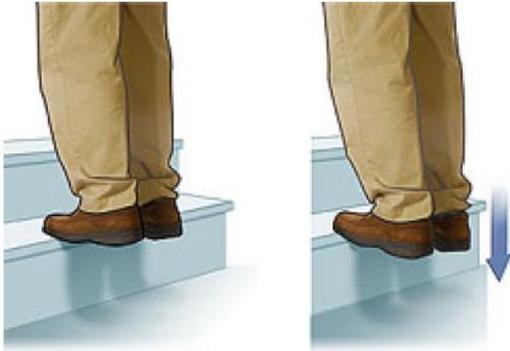
Floor Stretch



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1. Stand about 2 feet from a wall, and place your hands on the wall at about shoulder height. Or you can stand behind a chair, placing your hands on the back of it for balance.
2. Step back with the leg you want to stretch. Keep the leg straight, and press your heel into the floor with your toe turned slightly in.
3. Lean forward, and bend your other leg slightly. Feel the stretch in the Achilles tendon of your back leg. Hold for at least 15 to 30 seconds.
4. Repeat 2 to 4 times a session, up to 5 sessions a day.

Stair Stretch



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1. Stand with the balls of both feet on the edge of a step or curb (or a medium-sized phone book). With at least one hand, hold onto something solid for balance, such as a banister or handrail.
2. Keeping your affected leg straight, slowly let that heel hang down off the step or curb until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf and/or Achilles area. Some of your weight should still be on the other leg.
3. Hold this position for at least 15 to 30 seconds.
4. Repeat 2 to 4 times a session, up to 5 times a day or whenever your Achilles tendon starts to feel tight. This stretch can also be done with your knee slightly bent.

Strength Exercise



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1. This exercise will get you started on building strength after an Achilles tendon injury. Dr. Caruso or physical therapist can help you move on to more challenging exercises as you heal and get stronger.
2. Stand on a step with your heel off the edge of the step. Hold on to a handrail or wall for balance.
3. Push up on your toes, then slowly count to 10 as you lower yourself back down until your heel is below the step. If it hurts to push up on your toes, try putting most of your weight on your other foot as you push up, or try using your arms to help you. If you can't do this exercise without causing pain, stop the exercise and talk to Dr. Caruso.
4. Repeat the exercise 8 to 12 times, half with the knee straight and half with the knee bent.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

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