

Eccentric exercises for the Achilles tendon

Orthopaedics

Information for patients and carers

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Introduction

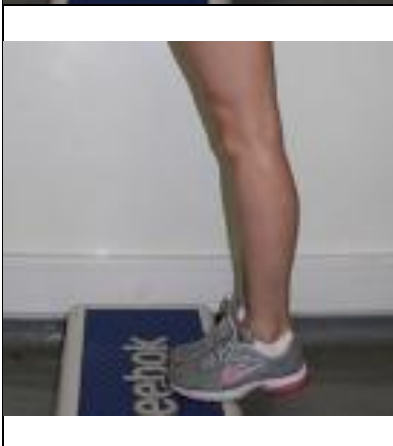
You have been asked to begin some exercises to help you recover from your injury or surgery to your Achilles tendon. These will help to strengthen your tendon and the muscles that support it.

The exercises you need to start doing are known as 'eccentric loading exercises'. These exercises stretch the tendon and muscles, which will contract and get shorter as you perform the movement.

How are the exercises done?

1. First, you will need a small step or a curb that you can stand on. You may need something stable to hold on to for balance.

	2. Stand on a step with the balls of your feet on the edge. Your heels should be hanging over the edge of the step. 3. Keep both of your knees straight. This will load a muscle that's part of the Achilles tendon called the gastrocnemius.
	4. Keep your injured foot on the step. Lift your non-injured foot off the step.
	5. Slowly lower yourself down using your injured ankle.

	6. Your heel should move towards the floor. The ball of your foot should remain in contact with the edge of the step.
	7. Return your non-injured foot to the step and repeat the exercise. 8. Perform 3 sets with 15 repetitions keeping your knees straight. 9. Perform 3 more sets with 15 repetitions keeping your knees bent (see step 4).

How often should they be performed?

These exercises should be done twice per day, such as in the morning and again in the evening.

What happens next?

You will have been referred to physiotherapy. They will keep track your performance and give you more exercises to help advance your recovery.

You will have a further follow-up in your consultant's follow-up clinic. A team member will check your overall progress then.