

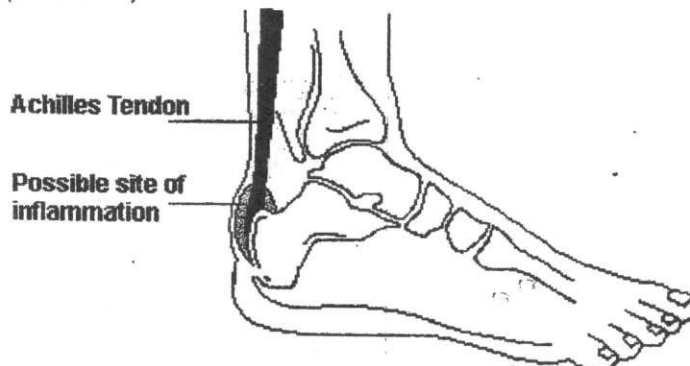
# Achilles Tendonitis

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## ***What is this injury?***

A tendon is made of connective tissue that joins muscle to bone. The largest tendon in the human body is the Achilles tendon, which attaches the powerful calf muscles (gastrocnemius and soleus) to the heel bone (calcaneus).



Tendinitis is inflammation of a tendon. Thus, Achilles tendinitis is an inflammation of the Achilles tendon. The inflammation may be localized to the end of the tendon closest to the heel or may spread upward to affect even the muscles of the calf. Swelling occurs and pain is felt upon contraction of the calf muscles. In severe cases, pain may be felt even at rest.

## ***How does the injury occur?***

Achilles tendinitis is most commonly an overuse injury in athletes whose sports require jumping, such as in basketball or volleyball. The injury often afflicts track and field athletes, particularly high jumpers, long jumpers, triple jumpers, and hurdlers. Rarely, the injury occurs in walkers, joggers, runners, and dancers.

Generally, Achilles tendinitis begins as a dull pain at the back of the lower leg just above the heel when pushing off the ground with the foot. Unless the activity is stopped, the condition rapidly gets worse until any activity requiring a push-off from the ground by the foot becomes quite painful and nearly impossible.