

**Here at Simply Feet - we like to look at everything in a simple way!**

The Traffic Light symbol above indicates the way you should approach this condition. **Amber means that you can begin treating this condition yourself. However, you should seek professional help if you want reassurance that what you are doing is correct or if the condition fails to improve within a short time.**

So, let's approach your problem in a methodical and logical manner, so that you can gain some knowledge about your condition. After reading a little about it, you can decide on the best course of action.

Remember this advice is for **guidance only** and if you are in any doubt at all, please consult your HPC Registered Podiatrist, Physiotherapist or your GP.

## Achilles Tendon Problems

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### What are they?

The achilles tendon connects the heel of the foot to the calf muscles.

It is the strongest tendon in your body.

These problems occur at the back of the foot where you will feel a sharp, constant pain when you walk or run, just above your heel.

### Some Common Causes:

- Tight Calf Muscles
- Increased activity over and above what you were doing previously, especially walking uphill or up the stairs
- Wearing incorrect unsupportive shoes
- Your feet being allowed to roll inwards (Pronation)
- One leg being longer than the other one (Leg Length Discrepancy)

### The Main Symptoms are:

- Sharp or burning pain about two inches above the back of your heel.
- Mild to moderate swelling.
- The tendon may be thicker on one foot than the other one.
- You may be able to feel small lumps along the tendon.
- You may be able to hear a crackling sound when you move your ankle.

### Some suggested treatment programs:

- Rest.
- Reduce your activity levels.
- Try not to walk in flat shoes or barefoot.
- Use a heel lift in your shoe to reduce tension over the area.
- Use cold therapy to reduce the swelling – an ice pack for 20 minutes x three times per day.
- The use of orthotics to control rearfoot pronation may be useful.
- Once the problem has settled down ease back into activity gradually.
- Gently stretch the area whenever you are going back to activity levels that have previously prompted the problem to occur – reducing the chances of more achilles tendon problems.
- Achilles injuries can be stubborn. If your pain has been present on and off for a number of years then consulting with a specialist podiatrist, or contacting your GP for referral to a physiotherapist or, in severe cases an orthopaedic surgeon, may be the best option.