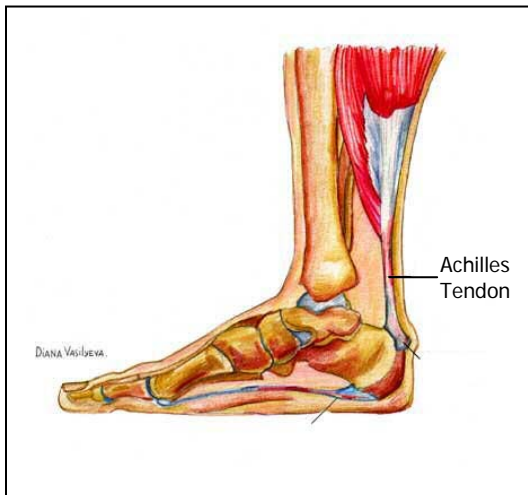


Ankle Injuries – Achilles Tendonitis



Achilles tendonitis is an inflammation of the Achilles tendon (located on the posterior portion of the tibia above the heel bone) that results in pain, swelling, and quite possibly the inability to walk. The Achilles tendon is responsible for connecting the muscles of the lower leg to the foot. When inflammation occurs, everyday activities may become difficult or even impossible as pain or

weakness in the tendon prevents the foot from moving up and down (dorsiflexion and plantarflexion).

Achilles tendonitis has a number of possible causes. Some of these include:

- Incorrect footwear
- Changes in footwear
- Overuse
- Congenital defects
- Increase in activity level
- Inadequate stretching prior to and following exercise

The symptoms of Achilles tendonitis should not be ignored or taken lightly. Without proper treatment, this injury may develop into a torn Achilles tendon, which is a much more traumatic and debilitating injury requiring surgery to repair.

In the event of a single traumatic event causing pain in the Achilles, the activity causing the pain should be ceased immediately and one

should seek medical attention. A more gradual onset of Achilles tendonitis may be alleviated with stretching or by changing footwear or training environment. If pain does not subside with self-treatment, a physician or physical therapist should be consulted. Following a thorough evaluation, a physical therapist may employ such methods as manual techniques, stretching, heat, ice, electrical stimulation, and therapeutic exercise.