Tendinopathy

A tendinopathy is a global term for the tendon that presents with abnormalities within its setup and a failed healing response. You may or may not have associated inflammation of the tendon. Tendinopathies can take anything from 3-18months to recover. Tendinopathy is a generic description and has previously been named as tendonitis, tendinosis and tendon disrepair. As it is unknown what stage the tendon is in, this has been renamed tendinopathy to encompass all terminologies.

Tendinopathies can occur over time or following a recent injury. Inflammation can be a result of repeated micro-traumas and tends to respond well to simple pain relief to help you manage your symptoms and relative rest. Tendinopathies can also happen where there is a change to the structure of the tendon, which is sometimes called degeneration. This is often caused by repetitive strain without enough time to recover.

What are the Symptoms?

- Swelling
- Pain
- Stiffness: especially after long periods of inactivity
- Warm to touch
- Eases with movement

What Next?

If you present with pain, your tendon will benefit from offloading for a few days. There is also a high likelihood that you will have lost strength. It is really important to rebuild this strength without irritating the tendon. Activities such as repetitive stretching and shortening of the tendon can irritate it, so stretches are not recommended. Static exercises can be very beneficial to help you with gaining strength and reducing pain. Start at holding a static muscular contraction around the joint with pain and hold for 5-6 seconds. Repeat this 5 times. Slowly build up to 30 seconds with an accumulated load of 2-3min throughout the day. Do not push into high levels of pain, but some discomfort is expected.

Example Exercise
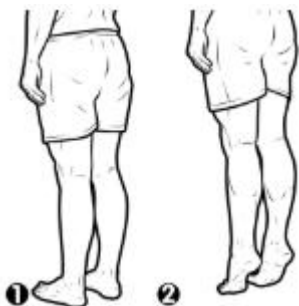
Static Calf Raises
Stand on your tip toes and your heels off of the floor
Raise to as high as you can without high levels of pain
Keep most pressure going through your big toes
Hold for 6 seconds
Rest
Repeat