

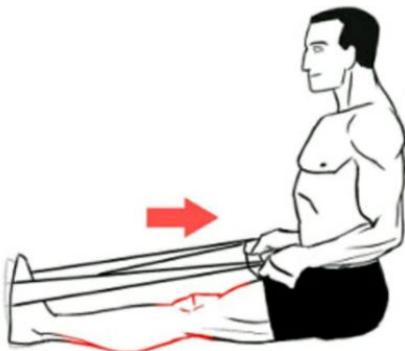
# Eccentric Loading: Achilles Tendinopathy

## Summary

- These exercises aim to improve the strength of your achilles tendon and should be performed 2-3 times per day, 4-5 days a week.
- *Aim to complete 3 sets of 10-15 reps as you are able to.*
- *Start with 5-10 reps of each exercise and gradually build this up.*
- *Hold each stretch for 15-30 seconds*
- Regularly perform these exercises to prevent future symptoms. Stay active and avoid static postures.
- In the early stages this exercise *may be painful*, but do not worry this is normal, experience shows that in most cases will get better as a result of the exercise.
- You can take painkillers as advised by a prescribing clinician or pharmacist. Taking them before exercise can help you stay active without causing extra pain.
- Your pain should ease and improvement should be seen within 4-6 weeks and full healing up to 3-6 months after commencing these exercises.

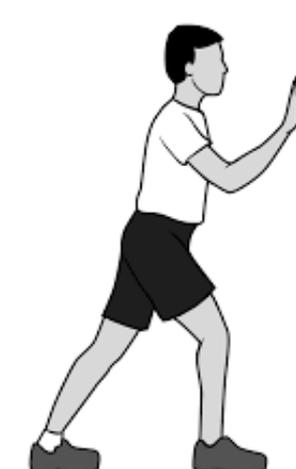
**Stretches** - Try to do these exercises 2-3 times a day and 3-5 days a week

## Seated Calf Stretch



1. Sit on the floor with your legs extended.
2. Loop a resistance band or towel around one foot, holding both sides of it with your hands.
3. Gently pull your toes toward your shin until you feel the stretch in your calf.
4. Hold for 15-30 seconds.
5. Repeat on the other leg.
6. Complete 5-10 sets on each leg.

## Lunging Calf Stretch

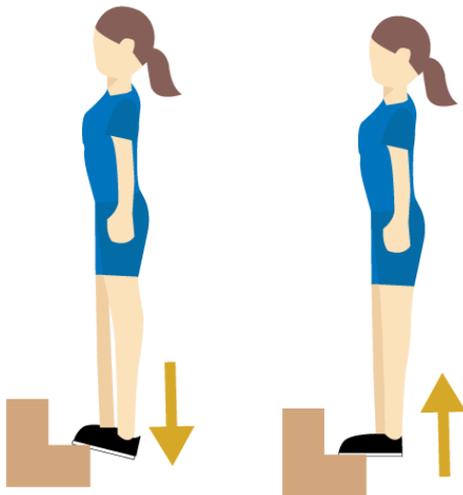


1. Stand facing the wall in a lunge position, keeping your back leg straight. If you're not near a wall, you can also just do this with your hands on your hips.
2. Lean into the wall and press your back heel down so it's flat on the ground. The further apart your feet are, the deeper the stretch will be.
3. Hold for 15-30 seconds and swap legs.
4. Repeat 5-10 times on each leg.

## Exercises

\* Each exercise should be performed 10-15 times and repeated 3 times with 1-2 minutes rest in between. Start exercises with both legs and as they get easier can be progressed to using a single leg per rep.

### 1. Heel drops (straight legs)



1. Stand on a step/stairs with the balls of your feet on the edge.
2. Your heels should be hanging over the edge of the step
3. Hold onto something stable for balance
4. Keep both knees straight
5. Lift your heels and rise up onto the balls of your feet
6. Slowly lower yourself down .
7. Your heel should move towards the floor, and the ball of your feet should remain in contact with the edge of the step.
8. Return to the starting position and repeat the exercise.

### 2. Heel drops (knees bent)



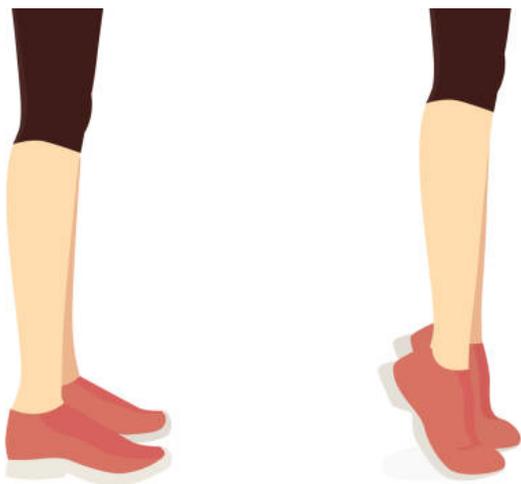
Following similar steps as above but with knees bent:

1. Stand on a step/stairs with the balls of your feet on the edge.
2. Your heels should be hanging over the edge of the step
3. Hold onto something stable for balance
4. Keep both knees slightly bent
5. Lift your heels and rise up onto the balls of your feet
6. Slowly lower yourself down.
7. Your heel should move towards the floor, and the ball of your feet should remain in contact with the edge of the step.
8. Return to the starting position and repeat.

**Regression** -If the above exercises are difficult, causing significant pain or discomfort, start with these simplified versions of the exercises and when these become easier, progress to the exercises above.

**\*Each exercise should be performed 12- 15 times and repeated 3 times with 1-2 minutes rest in between. Start exercises with both legs and as they get easier can be progressed to using a single leg per rep.**

### 1. Tiptoes (legs straight)



1. Stand with your feet hip-width apart.
2. You can hold onto something stable for balance.
3. Go up onto tiptoes and hold for 5-10 seconds.
4. Slowly lower yourself down.
5. Return to the start position and repeat.

### 2. Tiptoes (knees bent)



Again, similar to exercise above, but with knees bent

1. Stand up on both feet with your knees bent.
2. Hold onto something stable for balance.
3. Go up onto tiptoes and hold for 5-10 seconds.
4. Slowly lower yourself down.
5. Return to the start position and repeat.

**Progression** -When you are able to do up to 15 repetitions of exercises 1 and 2 above, progress them by adding weights to increase the load as you exercise.\***Weights can be replaced by heavier household objects that are easy to hold, for example tins of baked beans, bags of sugar, books or bottles of water.**

### 1. Weighted heel drops (legs straight)



1. Using desired weights, stand on a step/stairs with the balls of your feet on the edge.
2. Your heels should be hanging over the edge of the step.
3. Keep both knees straight.
4. Using both feet, lift your heels and rise up onto the balls of your feet.
5. Slowly lower yourself down
6. Your heel should move towards the floor, and the ball of your foot should remain in contact with the edge of the step.
7. Repeat the exercise

### 2. Weighted heel drops (knees bent)



1. Using desired weights, stand on a step/stairs with the balls of your feet on the edge.
2. Your heels should be hanging over the edge of the step.
3. Keep **both** knees slightly bent.
4. Using both feet, lift your heels and rise up onto the balls of your feet.
5. Slowly lower yourself down
6. Your heel should move towards the floor, and the ball of your foot should remain in contact with the edge of the step.
7. Return to start position and repeat

\* make sure you are in a safe position, to avoid falls/injury, while doing this exercise. Avoid unstable surfaces and make sure you are balanced before commencing

### 3. Farmer's Walk on Toes



1. Grab a pair of heavy dumbbells and hold them at your sides at arm's length.
2. Raise your heels and walk forward (or in a circle) for 60 seconds.
3. Be sure to stand as tall as you can and stick your chest out.
4. Choose the heaviest pair of dumbbells that allows you to perform the exercise without breaking form for 60 seconds.

### The Final Stage of your rehabilitation

Moving onwards from the above exercises, we'll be looking to incorporate more **stability** exercises to help improve **balance** and **proprioception**. These would improve your overall strength and help prevent future injuries.

These will include some single-leg exercises and more dynamic exercises as below:

**\*increase time/intensity/height/distance accordingly**

#### **1. Single-leg balance**

- To progress: do it on an unstable surface
- single-leg squat +/- unstable surface
- Single-leg hops

#### **2. Squat jumps**

- To progress: add a height (step/box)

#### **3. Single-leg Hops**

- To progress: front, back and side to side