

I Think I Tore My Achilles Tendon

Understanding Achilles Tendon Ruptures

What Is Causing Sudden Back-of-Ankle Pain?

An Achilles rupture is a sudden, complete or partial tear of the tendon connecting your calf muscles to your heel bone. It typically occurs during a forceful push-off, pivot, or jump — often in someone returning to sport after time away — and can also follow a period of chronic Achilles tendon irritation that weakened the tendon.

What Does It Feel Like?

- A sudden, sharp pain, often described as feeling like being kicked in the back of the ankle
- An audible pop or snap at the moment of injury
- Immediate weakness pushing off the foot or going up stairs
- Swelling and bruising at the back of the ankle
- A noticeable gap or divot felt above the heel
- Inability to rise up onto your toes on the injured side

What Causes It?

- Sudden pivoting, jumping, or sprinting — especially in “weekend warrior” athletes
- Pre-existing, untreated Achilles tendinopathy that weakens the tendon over time
- Being in your 30s to 50s, the most common age range for this injury
- Returning to high-intensity activity after a period of deconditioning
- Certain medications, including some antibiotics and corticosteroid injections

What Makes It Worse?

- Trying to walk normally or push off on the affected leg
- Delaying evaluation and treatment
- Any activity requiring a calf raise before it's medically cleared

When Should I Be Concerned?

- This injury should never be managed on a “wait and see” basis
- Any suspected rupture — a pop, sudden weakness, or a palpable gap in the tendon — needs prompt medical evaluation
- Inability to perform a single-leg heel raise is a hallmark sign that needs urgent assessment

The Good News

Whether treated surgically or non-surgically, structured physical therapy is essential at every stage of recovery to safely restore strength, motion, and confidence returning to activity.

Most patients return to full activity within **4 to 6 months**, with physical therapy typically beginning within days to weeks of injury or surgery under your physician's guidance.

This information is for general educational purposes only and is not a substitute for a professional evaluation. Call us today — we have immediate openings with no waitlist.

Call (781) 769-2040 | Book online at www.ptandsr.com