**Achilles tendonitis**

**What is Achilles tendonitis?**

Achilles tendonitis is an inflammation of the Achilles tendon, which connects the calf muscle to the heel bone.

**Causes of Achilles tendonitis**

The main cause of Achilles tendonitis is overuse; this condition is common in long distance runners and athletes who participate in jumping events. Injuries can also occur if physical activity is undertaken without a sufficient warm up and if training is suddenly increased. Other causes include badly fitting and unsupportive footwear and a poor level of general fitness.

**Symptoms of Achilles tendonitis**

Common symptoms include prolonged mild pain during or after physical activity, stiffness in the leg and inflammation around the tendon.

**Treating Achilles tendonitis**

Treatment for Achilles tendonitis usually involves a period of rest, anti-inflammatory medication and pain relief. Bandaging may help to support and protect the heel and steroid injections may also be given; this is common in professional sports players. Physiotherapy may be recommended to strengthen the muscles surrounding the tendon and increase movement.

**Preventing Achilles tendonitis**

Gradually increasing training and allowing recovery time will reduce the possibility of suffering from tendonitis. It is important to wear suitable footwear, which will support the foot and help to prevent injury. Thorough warmups and cool downs will help to prevent the risk of all injuries.