



Hilliard Bradley High School/Memorial Middle School Sports Medicine

What is tendinitis?

A tendon connects a muscle to a bone. Sometimes, the tendon becomes inflamed. This causes pain, swelling, redness, crepitus (a “creaking” feeling along the tendon) and loss of strength.

Most tendinitis is minor. It affects many groups of people, including athletes. The worst type of tendinitis is a tear in a tendon. This is rare in high school athletics.

Tendinitis can occur anywhere in the body, but in athletics it’s commonly seen in the lower leg (Achilles tendon), knee, shoulder, foot, elbow, and thumb.



What causes tendinitis?

Tendinitis is caused by many different things.

It can be caused by a sudden injury. Sometimes a muscle injury may also cause inflammation in the tendon as well.

Tendinitis may also be caused by a chronic injury. Chronic injuries take time to happen. This is also known as “overuse”. Doing the same motion repetitively (like swimming, running, or throwing) can slowly cause inflammation to build up. Poor mechanics may also predispose you to developing an overuse injury.

What should I do if I think I have tendinitis?

Go see your athletic trainers. They can give you more information on your injury and can help you find ways to heal.

Tendinitis is commonly treated with rest and ice. This will help decrease the inflammation in the tendon. Your athletic trainer will also probably have you perform rehabilitative exercises, or “rehab”. These exercises will help your tendon and the surrounding muscles become stronger and heal faster.

Medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen (Tylenol) will also help the inflammation in the muscle decrease, but ask your parent/guardian before use.

Every case of tendinitis is different. Your athletic trainer may try several different things to help you heal. If you ever have questions about a treatment, it is important to ask.

How long will I have to sit out from my sport?

Each person is different. Some people may be able to manage their tendinitis and still participate. However, tendinitis will not go away on its own, so most people end up having to miss a few days or even a few weeks. Typically, it takes a week or two for the inflammation to decrease enough to participate. Your athletic trainer can answer more questions about your specific restrictions. It is important to remember that if your athletic trainers and coaches are telling you that you have to rest, it is because it will help you heal and prevent your injury from becoming much worse.

How can I prevent tendinitis?

There are several ways to prevent tendinitis. Getting a proper warm-up and a good cool-down before and after activity will help your muscles and tendons be ready to exercise and help them relax after exercise is over. It is very important to work on your mechanics in your sport to make sure that doing a motion improperly is not making you more likely to become injured. Your coaches and athletic trainers can help you make sure your throw, serve, swim stroke, or running motion is the proper one, so ask them for guidance.

You can also perform rehabilitative exercises to prevent tendinitis from occurring or re-occurring. These exercises make sure that everything is strong enough to support your body when you are participating. Ask your athletic trainers for guidance with starting a rehab program.

