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#### **Customer Services Department**

Livewell Southwest Room AF3, Local Care Centre 200 Mount Gould Road Plymouth PL4 7PY

Tel: 01752 435201

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### **Contact details**

The Minor Injuries Units are open every day of the year, including Bank Holidays.

**Minor Injuries Unit Cumberland Centre** 

**Damerel Close Plymouth** PL1 4JZ

Tel: 01752 434390

Opening times: 8:30am - 9pm

**Minor Injuries Unit South Hams Hospital** 

Plymouth Road Kingsbridge **TQ7 1AT** 

Tel: 01548 852349

Opening times: 9am - 5pm

**Minor Injuries Unit Tavistock Hospital** 

Spring Hill **Tavistock PL19 8LD** 

Tel: 01822 612233

Opening times: 8am - 10pm

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## **Tendonitis**



# **Minor Injuries Unit**

**Cumberland Centre South Hams Hospital Tavistock Hospital** 



This information leaflet is designed to supplement the information the Practitioner has already given you.

#### What is Tendonitis?

Tendonitis is a term often used to describe an inflamed and painful tendon.

Tendons attach muscle to bone helping joints to move as muscles contract. Some tendons are surrounded by a protective cover which contains synovial fluid. The fluid helps the tendon to move easily without causing friction.

Tendon pain can affect the shoulder, elbow, wrist, finger, knee or back of the heel (Achilles).

#### **Common causes of Tendonitis**

A tendon injury - for example, while playing sports that involve throwing or using a racquet, such as tennis

Overusing a tendon - for example, using a computer mouse may cause tendonitis in your wrist because of repetitive strain injury (RSI).

## **Symptoms**

Pain that is worse when using the affected area.

**'Crepitus'**, the sensation of grating or crackling as it moves. This can be felt on examination.

**Swelling** or heat over the affected area.

#### **Treatment**

Tendonitis can last for only a few days although in some cases it can be persistent for a few weeks or even months.

The best initial treatment for Tendonitis is symptomatic treatment (treating the symptoms) at home.

Rest the tendon: Stop doing the activity that caused the inflammation. This is important to allow the tendon to settle down and therefore ease the pain. It will also prevent any further inflammation or damage.

Occasionally you may be provided with a support or splint. This will keep the area still, although some gentle movement is still advised.

The length of time needed to rest the affected area depends on which tendon is affected and how severely. It is a good idea to rest it until the pain has improved.

Ice: Using an ice pack on the affected area will help reduce pain and inflammation. Do not place ice directly on the skin as this will burn. Wrap it in a towel first.

Use for 15 - 20 minutes, 3 - 4 times a day. This can also be used after exercise to stop it recurring.

Pain relief: Painkillers will have been recommended to you by the Practitioner. Any past medical problems will have been taken into account. Simple analgesia such as Paracetamol and Ibuprofen are best and work well together - remember to follow the instructions on the

packet as manufacturers may vary in dosage.

## Follow up

It is advisable to allow 10 days for any improvement of symptoms. If there has been no improvement in this time, it may be necessary to seek further advice from your GP. Occasionally referral to a physiotherapist may be necessary, or even further investigations, but this will be for your GP to decide.

#### After care

Resting can stop tendonitis from becoming worse. Once the pain has subsided, strengthening the muscles around the tendon can help stop it recurring.

Repetitive movements will increase the risk of occurrence of tendonitis, it may be necessary to ask your employer to provide regular rest periods or different duties. Sometimes moving your computer, mouse or keyboard into a different position can relieve any repetitive strain.

Comfortable footwear is vital, especially if your work means you are on your feet. Ensure you have a good arch support and preferably high back shoes. If you are unsure, seek professional advice about your foot wear.