

# FEEL BETTER NOW

City Physiotherapy can treat all of your musculoskeletal aches and pains.



CITY PHYSIOTHERAPY

## Overcoming your painful knees with physiotherapy

A common cause of knee pain is incorrect tracking of the patella (knee cap). In this condition, your patella is pulled out of alignment due to a combination of soft tissue tightness and muscle weakness. This can place stress on the structures attaching to the patella and also to the joint underneath the patella. This joint is called the Patello-femoral joint.

Your physiotherapist can quickly assess whether mal-alignment of your patella is responsible for your knee pain. This is achieved by getting you to perform a previously painful activity (e.g. a squat) with your patella taped into a corrected position.

Treatment of Patello-femoral mal tracking is very effective and involves a combination of taping, stretching and strengthening, to correct the mal-alignment.

However, avoidance of certain activities that may increase stress through this area will also be required. This involves

- Squatting
- Lunging
- Stairs
- Kneeling
- Prolonged sitting with bent knees
- Any activity such as hopping, jumping or running

Generally, you can return to your normal sport or activities quickly if taping your knee controls the pain. Once the stretching and strengthening have reduced the mal-alignment, you can cease the taping, but you may need to continue your exercises indefinitely.

## What is Achilles Tendonitis/Tendinopathy?

**Achilles Tendonitis** is a term that commonly refers to an inflammation of the Achilles tendon. It is an overuse injury that is common especially to joggers and jumpers, due to the repetitive action and so may occur in other activities that requires the same repetitive action.

Most experts now use the term **Achilles tendinopathy** to include both inflammation and micro-tears that may be present within the muscle.

### What Causes Tendon Pain?

Tendons are the tough fibres that connect muscle to bone. Most tendon injuries occur near joints, such as the shoulder, elbow,

knee, and ankle. A tendon injury may seem to happen suddenly, but usually it is the result of many tiny tears to the tendon that have happened over time.

### What Causes Achilles Tendonitis?

Most tendon injuries are the result of gradual wear and tear to the tendon from overuse or ageing. Anyone can have a

tendon injury, but people who make the same motions over and over in their jobs, sports, or daily activities are more likely to damage a tendon.

A tendon injury can happen suddenly or little by little. You are more likely to have a sudden injury if the tendon has been weakened over time.

#### Common Causes of Achilles Tendonitis include:

- Over-training
- Sudden change in training surface – e.g. grass to asphalt
- Flat feet
- High foot arch with tight Achilles tendon
- Tight hamstring and calf muscles
- Toe walking or constantly wearing high heels
- Poorly supportive footwear
- Hill running.
- Poor eccentric strength

#### What are the Symptoms of Achilles Tendonitis?

Achilles tendonitis may be felt as a burning pain at the beginning of activity, which gets less during activity and then worsens following activity. The tendon may feel stiff first thing in the morning or at the beginning of exercise.

- Achilles tendonitis usually causes pain, stiffness, and loss of strength in the affected area.
- The pain may get worse when you use your Achilles tendon.
- You may have more pain and stiffness during the night or when you get up in the morning.
- The area may be tender, red, warm, or swollen if there is inflammation.
- You may notice a crunchy sound or feeling when you use the tendon.



#### How is Achilles Tendonitis Diagnosed?

Your physiotherapist or sports doctor can usually confirm the diagnosis of Achilles tendonitis in the clinic. They will base their diagnosis on your history, symptom behaviour and clinical tests.

Achilles tendons will often have a painful and prominent lump within the tendon.

Further investigations such as an US scan may be required.

#### What are the Aims of Achilles Tendonitis Treatment?

Achilles tendonitis is one of the most common problems that physiotherapists see and it is unfortunately an injury that often recurs if you return to sport too soon.

#### Rehabilitation

##### Early Injury Protection: Pain Reduction & Anti-inflammatory Phase

As with most soft tissue injuries the initial treatment is RICE - Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. Appropriate use of anti inflammatory medications and supportive taping will also help.

#### Regain Full Range of Motion

If you protect your injured Achilles tendon well in the early stages the torn tendon fibres should reattach. Mature scar formation takes at least six weeks. During this time period you should be aiming to prevent a poorly formed scar that will re-tear in the future.

It is important to lengthen and orientate your healing scar tissue with physiotherapy soft tissue techniques, muscle stretches, nerve mobilisations and eccentric exercises.

#### Restore Eccentric Muscle Strength

Calf muscles work in two directions. They push you up (concentric) and control the downward movement (eccentric). Most Achilles injuries occur during the controlled lengthening (eccentric) phase. Your City Physiotherapy physiotherapist will guide you on an eccentric calf strengthening program when appropriate.

#### Restore Concentric Muscle Strength

Calf strength and power should be gradually progressed from non-weight bear to partial and then full weight bear and resistance loaded exercises. You may also require strengthening for other leg muscles, gluteals and your core muscles.

#### Normalise Foot Biomechanics

Achilles tendon injuries can occur from poor foot biomechanics or poor footwear so these issues may need to be addressed.

#### Restore High Speed, Power, Proprioception & Agility & Return to Sport

Most Achilles tendon injuries occur during high speed activities such as running. To prevent a recurrence as you return to sport, your physiotherapist will guide you with specific exercises to address these important components of rehabilitation. The aim being to prevent a recurrence of injury and improve your sporting performance.



## Childhood musculoskeletal pain

**Childhood musculoskeletal pain usually occurs after a period of rapid growth and is quite area specific. It may be aggravated by sporting activities or poor posture brought on by long periods of sitting hunched over a computer or mobile device.**

It is generally seen from the age of eleven upwards until the growth period has finished. Children can complain of sore feet, heels, Achilles tendons, knees, shins, shoulders, hips, neck or back pain. Onset usually occurs without any significant event and can come and go. A rapid growth spurt may have occurred recently. Pain can be aggravated by specific activities such as running, standing or sitting. Children's bodies are rapidly changing and often appear gangly and are not quite comfortable in their body. They can also be quite self-conscious and posture may reflect this. Some of the most commonly seen complaints are: plantar fasciitis, Sever's disease, Osgood-Schlatter's disease, Patello-femoral issues, groin strains, scoliosis, swimmers shoulder and postural dysfunctions.



# Remedial massage therapy benefits

When muscles and tendons become damaged or impaired, knotted, tense or immobile remedial massage therapy can provide a healing treatment. Our Remedial Massage therapist can perform treatments that are gentle or strong, deep or shallow. A holistic assessment and treatment the whole body is performed. Identifying causes of pain or discomfort as far as possible back to the original issues, healing both the cause of the disorder as well as the symptoms.

A variety of treatments are used from trigger point therapy, cranio-sacral therapy, myofascial release, lymphatic drainage, deep tissue release, remedial sports massage techniques, connective tissue massage, stretching as well as vascular and applied nutrition.

Enrico our remedial massage therapist will perform treatments that include the stimulation to the blood supply allowing toxins in the muscles to be removed, the calming of the peripheral nervous system to ease pain and discomfort and the toning and relaxing of muscles to improve joint mobility. An improvement to the health of the cells, the repairing of tissues, and the easing of stiffness and tension can be gained.

Massage treatment sessions of ½ and full hour are available. Our remedial massage therapist can work closely with the physiotherapist's at City Physiotherapy and Sports Injury Clinic to get you in optimum shape for your lifestyle. Private Health fund rebates for remedial massage therapy may apply (depending on your cover). City Physiotherapy's remedial massage therapist is conveniently based in the Adelaide CBD at our 81 King William Street clinic.



# Turning 21

By Linda Shacklock, Director City Physiotherapy & Sports injury Clinic

**I'm celebrating my 21<sup>st</sup> this year and to be perfectly honest without sounding like a cliché, I can't believe how the time has flown. I'm looking back at 21 years of professional life as a physiotherapist already. I suppose 21 is a milestone that deserves reflection and celebration and so here I sit and reflect on where I am now.**

I've always had the ambition to be successful and known from an early age that I wanted to be a physiotherapist. I always loved helping people and easing their pain. It just seems to come naturally. That's the easy bit. Some of you who know me well have your own names for me - thumbs of steel, house of pain, I've come for my torture and the one I've heard the most is "gee you're strong" and quite often added to this - for someone so small. It's not all about the pain though.

Caring is what it's all about. Over the years I've learnt countless new techniques and a mixed bag of treatments. However, good outcome orientated therapeutic treatment aside I like to think I'm a caring person and that my patients come to me or to any of my wonderful caring staff for this as much as anything else. I love getting to know the people I treat, their stories, their emotions, what makes them uniquely them.

To this day I enjoy meeting new patients and I am honoured that I can be part of their lives. The power of touch and the value of listening should never be underestimated. As a hands on

practitioner and as an employer and operator of a small business I try to put my best foot forward at all times. I'm always learning and my biggest teachers have been my patients so to you all, I thank you. Being part of people's journeys is an honour and I think that if I can impart any wisdom to anyone who cares to read this then it would be to value the positive connections in your life. Make time for yourself, for your relationships and nurture the connectedness of the people who really allow you to be a part of their experiences and lives. Don't forget to breathe either. In this lies the value of your every day life, whether you are having a good day or a bad day. The sun will set and rise and tomorrow is another day.

I don't purport to now be full of wisdom at having reached this milestone of 21 years in the profession. It is nice to stop every once in awhile and reflect and pat yourself on the back and say to yourself, well done you should be proud of what you've achieved. Only for a short while though and then carry on each day with purpose and caring and you'll achieve what you set out to achieve.



## WHICH BRACES, SPLINTS OR SPORTS TAPE DO I NEED?

Your City Physiotherapy physiotherapist stocks a range of splints, braces, walking aids, tape and other equipment for your needs, to help you manage or overcome a problem or disability.

A physiotherapist can advise what is the best option for you and ensure it fits properly and suits your condition. Buying an off the shelf brace or splint without correct guidance may be placing your injury in a harmful, not helpful position.

There are many varied types of strapping tapes available. Your physiotherapist will advise you if your injury is best suited to the more rigid supportive styles of strapping tape or the range of more flexible types of tape that may assist you in your recovery.

## What to do after a Muscle Strain or Ligament Sprain?

If you suffer a soft tissue injury the best advice we can give you is to make a physiotherapy appointment as soon as possible for an accurate assessment. Prompt, appropriate treatment is much better than delay. Some injuries may appear to be a simple muscle, ligament or soft tissue injury could include a hairline fracture, bone bruising or dislocation.

### Early Management of a Soft Tissue Injury

**Rest:** Rest from painful exercise or a movement is essential in the early injury stage. The rule of thumb is, don't do anything that reproduces your pain for the initial two or three days. After that, you need to get it moving or other problems will develop. Your City physiotherapy physio will be able to provide injury-specific advice.

### Ice or Heat?

**Ice:** Ice is preferred for the initial two or three days post-injury. Apply ice for 20 minutes each two to three hours for the first few days. Ice should also help to reduce your pain and swelling in traumatic soft tissue injuries, such as ligament sprains, muscle tears or bruising.

**Heat:** It is preferable to avoid heat (and heat rubs) in the first 48 hours of injury

### Should You Use a Compressive Bandage / Support?

Yes. If it is possible to apply a compressive bandage or elastic support to the injury, it will help to control swelling and bleeding in the first few days. In most cases, the bandage/support will also help to support the injury as the new scar tissue is laid down. This should help to reduce your pain. Some injuries will benefit from more support such as a brace or rigid strapping tape. Your physiotherapist will advise you on what would be specifically required for your injury.



### Elevation?

Elevation of an injury in the first few days is very helpful

### When Should You Commence Treatment?

Researchers have found that intervention of physiotherapy treatment for acute soft tissue injuries within a few days has many benefits.

### Prompt Treatment Benefits include:

- Relieving your pain quicker via joint mobility techniques, soft tissue massage, electrotherapy etc
- Improving your scar tissue quality using techniques to guide the direction it forms
- Getting you back to sport or work quicker through faster healing rates
- Loosening or strengthening of your injured region with individually prescribed exercises and techniques
- Improving your performance when you do return to sport, work and your daily life
- Correct any biomechanical faults that may be affecting your movement, technique or predisposing you to injury.

### What If You Do Nothing?

Research tells us that injuries left untreated do take longer to heal and have lingering pain.

They are also more likely to recur and leave you with abnormal scar tissue and adhesions, joint stiffness and muscle weakness.

**CITY PHYSIOTHERAPY AND SPORTS INJURY CLINIC**

Call **8212 4886** for your next appointment or visit [cityphysiotherapy.com.au](http://cityphysiotherapy.com.au)

Level 6 / 108 King William Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000

81 King William Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000

Fax **8212 8028** Email [info@cityphysiotherapy.com.au](mailto:info@cityphysiotherapy.com.au) [facebook.com/CityPhysiotherapy](https://www.facebook.com/CityPhysiotherapy)



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