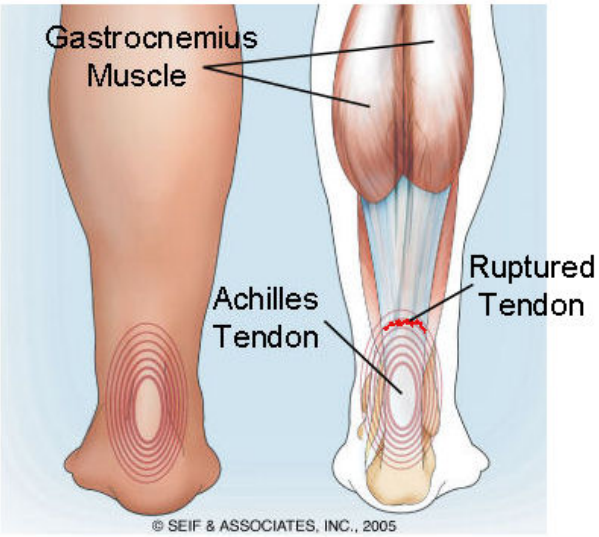
Achilles Tendon Rupture (Complete)

Tendons are the tough, fibrous, and stretchy *(elastic*) tissues that connect muscle to bone. The Achilles tendon is the large cord like structure *(tendon*) in the back of the leg just above the foot. It attaches the large muscles of the lower leg to the heel bone. You can feel this as the large cord just above the heel. The *diagnosis* (learning what is wrong) of complete Achilles tendon tear *(rupture*) is made by examination. You are not able to stand up on the toes of the injured side with this injury. Special x-rays will determine the extent of the injury. Surgical repair with casting is necessary with complete rupture of the tendon. Surgery allows the surgeon to put the tendon back together. The cast is used to allow the repair time to heal. The injury may be casted or immobilized for 6 to 10 weeks. Immobilization means that the tendon injured is kept in position with a cast or splint. Once your caregiver feels you have healed well enough, they will provide exercises you can do to make the injured tendon feel better *(rehabilitate).*



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- **Apply ice** to the injury for 10 to 20 minutes, 3 to 4 times per day. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin, splint, or immobilization device.
- **Use crutches** and move about only as instructed.
- **Keep leg elevated** above the level of the heart (the center of the chest) at all times when not using bathroom etc. Do not dangle the leg over a chair, couch, or bed. When lying down, elevate your leg on a couple pillows.
- **Elevation** prevents swelling and reduces pain.
- **Avoid use** other than gentle range of motion of toes.
- Do not drive a car until your caregiver specifically tells you it is safe to do so.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- If your caregiver has given you a follow-up appointment, it is very important to keep that appointment. Not keeping the appointment could result in a chronic or permanent injury, pain, and disability. If there is any problem keeping the appointment, you must call back to this facility for assistance.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your pain and swelling increase or pain is uncontrolled with medications.
- You develop new unexplained problems *(symptoms*) or an increase of the symptoms that brought you to your caregiver.
- You develop an inability to move your toes or foot, develop warmth and swelling in your foot, or begin running an unexplained temperature.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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