

Sweetwater Pain & Spine


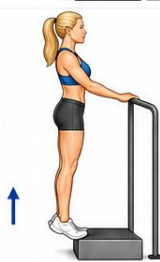



Home Exercise Handout

Achilles Tendinopathy

Achilles tendinopathy is a painful overuse condition of the Achilles tendon causing stiffness and pain at the back of the heel, typically worst with the first steps in the morning or after periods of rest. These exercises use progressive tendon loading — beginning with isometric holds for pain control, advancing through eccentric heel drops — to rebuild tendon strength and resilience. Perform them consistently; improvement typically occurs over 8–12 weeks.

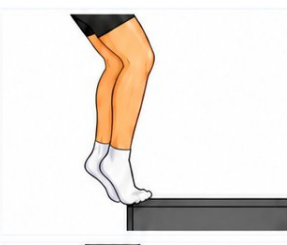
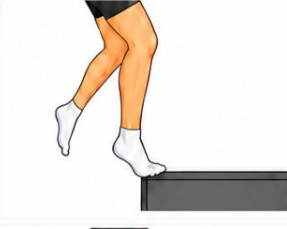
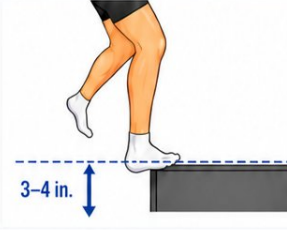

1 Straight-Knee Eccentric Heel Drop

2–3 sets • 8–15 reps • 3–5 days per week

	<p>1</p> <p>START POSITION</p> <p>Stand with the ball of the affected foot on the top edge of a step, heel hanging free.</p> <p>Use a railing for balance.</p>
	<p>2</p> <p>RISE ON TWO FEET</p> <p>Rise onto tiptoe using both feet — the good leg does the lifting.</p>
	<p>3</p> <p>LOWER SLOWLY</p> <p>Lift the good foot off the step. Slowly lower the heel of the affected leg below step level over 3–4 seconds.</p> <p>Keep the knee fully straight throughout the movement.</p>
	<p>4</p> <p>RETURN AND REPEAT</p> <p>Return both feet to the step and rise again on two feet before repeating.</p> <p>Knee must remain fully straight throughout — this loads the gastrocnemius specifically.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  3–4 SECONDS </div>

2 Bent-Knee Eccentric Heel Drop (Soleus)

3x15 reps • Knee bent 20° • 2x daily • 7 days/wk • 12 weeks

	<p>1</p> <p>STEP 1 – RISE ON BOTH FEET</p> <p>Rise up on both feet onto the step.</p> <p>Keep knees bent (~20°) throughout.</p>
	<p>2</p> <p>STEP 2 – LIFT UNINJURED FOOT</p> <p>Lift the uninjured foot entirely off the step.</p> <p>Only the injured leg remains on the step.</p> <p>Keep knee bent (~20°).</p>
	<p>3</p> <p>STEP 3 – SLOWLY LOWER HEEL BELOW STEP</p> <p>Slowly lower the heel below the step.</p> <p>Lower 3–4 inches below step level.</p> <p>Keep knee bent (~20°).</p> <p>Use a slow, controlled descent.</p>
	<p>4</p> <p>STEP 4 – RETURN BOTH FEET TO STEP</p> <p>Return the heel to step level.</p> <p>Place the uninjured foot back onto the step.</p> <p>Rise onto both feet.</p> <p>Maintain the ~20° knee bend.</p>

3 Isometric Calf Hold

1 set • 5 repetitions • 45 seconds hold • 3–5 days per week

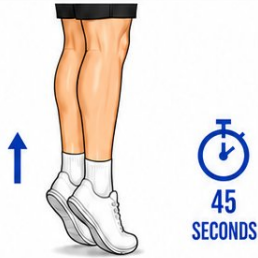
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STEP 1 – START ON BOTH FEET

Stand on both feet.
Use a railing or wall for balance if needed.

2



STEP 2 – RISE TO MID-HEIGHT

Rise to mid-height on your toes — approximately 50% of your maximum rise.
Hold 2 seconds at maximum height.
Hold this position for 45 seconds with moderate effort.

3



STEP 3 – LOWER & REST

Lower slowly over 3 seconds.
Rest for 2 minutes.
Perform 5 repetitions.

4 Standing Calf Stretch

1–2 sets • 30 seconds hold • Daily

1



GASTROCNEMIUS STRETCH

Stand facing a wall, affected leg behind.
Back knee straight,
heel flat on floor.
Lean toward the wall until you feel the stretch in the upper calf.
Hold for 30 seconds.

2



SOLEUS STRETCH

Same position,
but bend the back knee slightly — this shifts the stretch to the deeper soleus muscle.
Hold for 30 seconds.

PERFORM BOTH STRETCHES DAILY

■ Stop any exercise that causes sharp pain, new numbness or weakness, or worsening of symptoms, and contact our office. These exercises supplement but do not replace your provider's individualized plan.

Questions or concerns? Call Sweetwater Pain & Spine: (775) 870-1480

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