

## Welcome to the June 2009 edition of Neuhaus Foot and Ankle eNewsletter

As an added value to our friends and families, we have created this eNewsletter to help us stay healthy this year! Please e-mail us if there are topics of interest to you for future editions.

### What Is the Achilles Tendon?

A tendon is a band of tissue that connects a muscle to a bone. The Achilles tendon, the longest tendon in the body, runs down the back of the lower leg and connects the calf muscle to the heel bone. The Achilles tendon facilitates walking by helping to raise the heel off the ground.

Two common disorders that occur in the heel cord are Achilles tendonitis and Achilles tendonosis. Achilles tendonitis is an inflammation of the Achilles tendon. Over time the condition usually progresses to a degeneration of the tendon (Achilles tendonosis), in which the tendon loses its organized structure and may develop microscopic tears.

### What are the Symptoms of these Disorders?

The symptoms associated with Achilles tendonitis and tendonosis include:

- Pain such as aching, stiffness, soreness, or tenderness within the tendon.
- Tenderness, or sometimes intense pain, when the sides of the tendon are squeezed.
- When the disorder progresses to degeneration, the tendon may become enlarged and may develop nodules in the area where the tissue is damaged.

### What are the Common Causes?

Achilles tendonitis and tendonosis are usually caused by a sudden increase of a repetitive activity involving the Achilles tendon. Such activity puts too much stress on the tendon too quickly. Due to this ongoing stress on the tendon, the body is

unable to repair the injured tissue. The structure of the tendon is then altered, resulting in continued pain. Athletes are at high risk for developing disorders of the Achilles tendon. Achilles tendonitis and tendonosis are also common in individuals whose work puts stress on their ankles and feet, such as laborers or people with excessive pronation, flattening of the arch.

### How are Achilles Tendon Disorders Diagnosed?

In diagnosing Achilles tendonitis or tendonosis, Dr. Neuhaus will examine the patient's foot and ankle and evaluate the range of motion and condition of the tendon. The extent of the condition can be further assessed with x-rays, ultrasound, or MRI.

### What is the best treatment?

Treatment approaches for Achilles tendonitis or tendonosis are selected on the basis of how long the injury has been present and the degree of damage to the tendon. One or more of the following options may be recommended:

- **Immobilization.** The use of a cast or removable walking boot the Achilles tendon promotes healing.
- **Ice.** To reduce swelling, apply ice over a thin towel to the affected area for 20 minutes of each morning. Do not put ice directly against the skin.
- **Oral medications.** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, may be helpful in reducing the pain and inflammation.
- **Physical therapy.** This may include strengthening exercises, soft-tissue massage, running re-education, stretching, and ultrasound therapy.
- **Surgery.** If non-surgical approaches fail to restore the tendon, Dr. Neuhaus will select the best procedure to repair the tendon.

### Free Book

Request a free copy of

Foot Health 101

Healthy Feet are

Happy Feet

[www.neufoot.com](http://www.neufoot.com)



### Our Success Story

Please submit your success story about how Dr. Neuhaus helped eliminate your foot problem. You can share your story by going to [www.neufoot.com/contact.html](http://www.neufoot.com/contact.html) to e-mail us.

### Office Hours

Monday - Friday  
8am - 5pm

### Community Service "Keeping Nashville on Their Feet"

Dr. Neuhaus is teaming up with his son, Ryan of Troup 37, who is working on his Eagle Scout project "Keeping Nashville on Their Feet," which is a community service program to help collect shoes in good condition for the needy and then be delivered to The Nashville Rescue Mission. Men's athletic shoes, casual shoes, and work boots are most needed. Our goal is 500 collected shoes but we hope to make this an ongoing program with the help of the community. Shoe donation receptacles are located in Smyrna at the offices of: Neuhaus Foot & Ankle, Dhar Family Medicine, Fresenius Dialysis Clinic, DaVita Dialysis Clinic, Smyrna Rexall Drugs, StoneCrest Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Center, StoneCrest Family Physicians, and Tennessee Medicine and Pediatrics.

### Product of the Month Dr. Jill's Gel Heel Cushions



The soft gel pad cushions the heel with every step while the heels float on the cushioned pad. The gel pad has a soft velvet top cover for extra comfort while walking. The gel pads are used for patients who are experiencing heel pain, heel spurs, or heel calluses. The self-stick cushions make for easy application and can be used in all styles of footwear. The gel pads are washable and re-usable. Just apply to footwear after separating the pair of heel cushions and insert the cushions into heel area as far back as possible gel side down. If cushion is uncomfortable, remove and re-position it. Do not place product over an open wound. If irritation, discomfort, or any problem results from the use of this product, discontinue use immediately, and notify Dr. Neuhaus immediately.

### Accepting New Patients

"The greatest compliment a patient could give a doctor is the referral of friends and/or family members."

Starting January 2009, we will now be rewarding any current patients who refer a friend or family member with a free complimentary movie pass for them to use at the new **MALCO-ROXY Theater in Smyrna, TN.**

As always, if you have any questions or comments, feel free to email us anytime!  
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