



Tendinosis vs. Tendinitis

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Tendons are rope like structures that attach muscle to bone. Ligaments are similar structures that attach bones to other bones. When muscles move they exert stresses on tendons and ligaments that are attached to them.

When your muscles move in new ways or exert more work than they can handle, your muscles and tendons can sustain damage. If the demands to muscles are made gradually, muscles will heal and adapt to a new load. However, you can injure a tendon on a microscopic scale doing some activities. If you continue to do the same activities you will gradually accumulate many micro-injuries and you will start to experience pain. Injuries can be chronic or acute. Chronic injuries come on slow and persist over time. Acute injuries are sudden and cause immediate pain and inflammation. Tendon injuries require patience and rehabilitation because tendons heal slower than muscles do.

Tendinosis is a chronic degeneration without inflammation. Tendinosis is defined as accumulated tendon injuries over time, that occur without inflammation, and that don't heal properly. Tendinosis can occur in many different tendons with some of the most common being the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, shoulder, knee and heel. Tendinosis can result from long hours of activities such as playing sports or using computers, playing musical instruments, or doing manual labor. Some occupations that have increased risk for tendon injuries are, assembly line workers, mail sorters, computer programmers, writer, court recorders, data entry processors, sign language interpreters, cashiers, professional athletes, and musicians.

Tendinitis is an acute larger-scale injury accompanied by inflammation. Tendinitis is most common around the shoulders, elbows, wrists and heels. Tendinitis can result from injury or overuse in work or play or has been seen with aging as the tendon loses elasticity it becomes more vulnerable to injury. Symptoms in tendonitis involve pain with movement and mild swelling. Usually rest and inflammation reducing medications are used for treatment, if symptoms persist you should seek medical attention.

- Things you can do to help minimize your risks of developing tendinosis or tendonitis are:
- Use ergonomically designed equipment in your work site.
- Using proper techniques during your activities (sports, music, or typing)
- Take plenty of breaks and minimizing long overtime hours.

But most of all you should listen to your body for warning signs such as burning, stinging, aching, tenderness to the touch, and stiffness.

Usually tendinosis sneaks up on you, at first the pain only comes after long hard sessions of activities. Later the pain comes at lower levels of activity and last longer. Finally the pain becomes part of your life even normal activities can make it worse. Try to catch these injuries as early as you can, a visit to your Doctor or Physical Therapist can help you with your symptoms and help you prevent them in the future.