

Achilles Tendonitis Rehabilitation Exercises

You can do the towel stretch right away. When the towel stretch is too easy, try the standing calf stretch, soleus stretch, and leg lift. When you no longer have sharp pain in your calf or tendon, you can do the step-up, heel raises, and static and dynamic balance exercises.

- **Towel stretch:** Sit on a hard surface with one leg stretched out in front of you. Loop a towel around your toes and the ball of your foot and pull the towel toward your body keeping your knee straight. Hold this position for 15 to 30 seconds then relax. Repeat 3 times.
- **Standing calf stretch:** Facing a wall, put your hands against the wall at about eye level. Keep one leg back with the heel on the floor, and the other leg forward. Turn your back foot slightly inward (as if you were pigeon-toed) as you slowly lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times and then switch the position of your legs and repeat the exercise 3 times. Do this exercise several times each day.
- **Standing soleus stretch:** Stand facing a wall with your hands on a wall at about chest level. With both knees slightly bent and one foot back, gently lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in your lower calf. Angle the toes of your back foot slightly inward and keep your heel down on the floor. Hold this for 15 to 30 seconds. Return to the starting position. Repeat 3 times.
- **Side-lying leg lift:** Lying on your uninjured side, tighten the front thigh muscles on your top leg and lift that leg 8 to 10 inches away from the other leg. Keep the leg straight and lower slowly. Do 3 sets of 10.
- **Step-up:** Stand with the foot of your injured leg on a support (like a small step or block of wood) 3 to 5 inches high. Keep your other foot flat on the floor. Shift your weight onto your injured leg on the support straighten your knee as the other leg comes off the floor. Lower your leg back to the floor slowly. Do 3 sets of 10.



- **Heel raise:** Balance yourself while standing behind a chair or counter. Using the chair to help you, raise your body up onto your toes and hold for 5 seconds. Then slowly lower yourself down without holding onto the chair. Hold onto the chair or counter if you need to. When this exercise becomes less painful, try lowering on one leg only. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.

- **Balance and reach exercises**

Stand upright next to a chair with your injured leg farthest from the chair. This will provide you with support if you need it. Stand just on the foot of your injured leg. Try to raise the arch of this foot while keeping your toes on the floor.

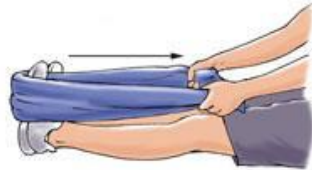
1. Keep your foot in this position and reach forward in front of you with the hand farthest away from the chair, allowing your knee to bend. Repeat this 10 times while maintaining the arch height. This exercise can be made more difficult by reaching farther in front of you. Do 2 sets.
2. Stand in the same position as above. While maintaining your arch height, reach the hand farthest away from the chair across your body toward the chair. The farther you reach, the more challenging the exercise. Do 2 sets of 10.

Written by Tammy White, MS, PT, and Phyllis Clapis, PT, DHSc, OCS, for RelayHealth.

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Towel stretch



Standing calf stretch



Standing soleus stretch



Side-lying leg lift



Step-up



Heel raise



Balance and reach exercise A



Balance and reach exercise B