



## TENDINOPATHIES: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

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### WHAT IS A TENDINOPATHY?

Distinct from “tendinitis” which is simply inflammation of an otherwise healthy tendon, a “tendinopathy” refers to a diseased tendon. Tendinopathies result in tenderness and pain particularly during movement or when exercising.

A tendinopathy can develop in any tendon in the body, and can occur at a musculo-tendinous junction (where the tendon and muscle join), mid tendon (referred to as “non-insertional”) and at the tendon insertion into the bone.

Non-insertional tendinopathies are often the result of cumulative micro-trauma, such as may be experienced through over-training.

### MORE ABOUT TENDONS...

It is worth understanding the anatomy of tendons and their function to understand tendinopathies better.

The function of tendons is to connect muscle tissues to bones. The same way ligaments connect bones to other bones, tendons act as the bridge between muscles and bones. This connection enables the tendons to regulate forces between muscle tissues during movement so that the body remains stable.

There are several types of tendons that perform different roles. Positional

tendons are found in fingers and help in maintaining positions like writing and holding. Energy-storing tendons help with movement and in recovering and storing energy efficiently. Tendons have different shapes depending on their placement. They can be flat, wide, ribbon shaped, circular or fan shaped

### MORE ABOUT TENDINOPATHY...

Most tendon injuries are the result of gradual wear and tear to the tendon from overuse or ageing. Anyone can have a tendon injury, but people who make the same motions over and over in their jobs, sports, or daily activities are more likely to damage a tendon.

Your tendons are designed to withstand high, repetitive loading, however, on occasions, when the load being applied to the tendon is too great for the tendon to withstand, the tendon begins to become stressed.

Evidence is growing that it is more than just the tendon and overload that causes a tendinopathy. Diabetics, post-menopausal women and men with high central adiposity (body fat) seem to be predisposed to tendinopathies and will need to carefully watch their training loads.

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Tendinopathy usually causes pain, stiffness, and loss of strength in the affected area.

- The pain may get worse when you move or exercise.
- You may have more pain and stiffness during the night or when you get up in the morning.
- The area may be tender, red, warm, or swollen if there is inflammation.
- You may notice a crunchy sound or feeling when you use the tendon.

The symptoms of a tendon injury can be a lot like those caused by bursitis.

### Suspect a tendinopathy?

#### Book an appointment:

**Physiodynamix**, Cramerview Village Centre, corner of Curzon and Main Roads, Bryanston, Johannesburg.

Open from: 7am to 5.30pm

Telephone: 011 706 7433