

A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED STUDY ON THE EFFICACY OF CONTINUED SPORTS ACTIVITY IN ATHLETES WITH ACHILLES TENDINOPATHY

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ABSTRACT

Background: Tendinopathy is a major medical problem associated with sports and physical activity in active people over 25 years of age. Athletes with long standing Achilles tendinopathy may be instructed to continue Achilles tendon loading activity with a use of a pain monitoring model during the treatment (Silbernayel 2006). This model may help the patient as well as the physical therapist to handle the pain and determine how the exercise should progress. The purpose of this study was to prospectively evaluate if continued running and jumping during treatment with an Achilles tendon- loading strengthening program would have an effect on the outcome.

Methods: This was a prospective, randomized controlled study to assess the outcome of 2 different rehabilitation protocols in athletes with Achilles tendinopathy. Altogether a total of 32 athletes were included in the study. The exercise training group was allowed to continue Achilles tendon-loading activity and the active rest group was not allowed to perform the physical activity that caused the symptoms or any other Achilles tendon-loading activity involving running or jumping for the first 6 weeks of rehabilitation. The outcome was evaluated by questionnaires for symptoms with physical activity and by muscle-tendon functional evaluations at baseline and 6 weeks and 12 weeks after the initiation of the treatment.

Results: There was significant difference between the treatment group and active rest group. No negative effects could be demonstrated from continuing Achilles tendon loading activity.

KEYWORDS: Achilles Tendon, Calf Muscle, Strength Training for Calf Muscles

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