KILOMETERKLUB

YOUR ACHILLES TENDON PAIN GUIDE FROM LIESEL

What I want you to do first at home

If this were my runner in week one, I would keep the plan simple: calm the irritation, remove the biggest trigger, and start rebuilding capacity instead of waiting passively for a miracle.

- Manage tendon load first rather than chasing inflammation alone
- Use progressive calf loading as the backbone of rehab
- Keep irritability low enough that morning symptoms are stable or improving
- Address footwear, hills, and speed exposure pragmatically
- Use the 24-hour response as your guide: if the next day is notably worse, the load was too high.
- Keep doing the strength work even once the pain settles.

What I would do in clinic

In clinic, I would first make sure the diagnosis fits the pattern and that we are not missing a more serious problem. Then I would identify the biggest load driver, test the weak links, calm the angry tissue down enough to let you move, and build a plan you can actually follow in real life. For this one, I would decide whether it behaves like a midportion or insertional problem, then choose calf loading and shoe strategy accordingly.

Strength & rehab prescription

The exercise plan should feel purposeful, not random. I usually break rehab into phases so the runner knows what matters now and what can wait.

- Early phase: isometric calf raises, double-leg calf raises, seated calf work
- Strength phase: heavy slow calf raises straight-knee and bent-knee, progressing to single-leg
- Elastic phase: pogos, skipping, submaximal hops, then faster running

Cross-training that usually works

Usually worth trying: Cycling, Pool running, Elliptical if tolerated, Upper-body conditioning.

Usually better to avoid early on: Hard hill sprints, Aggressive stretching into insertional pain, Sudden switch to minimalist shoes during rehab, Too much plyometrics too early.

Your best option is the one that lets you keep fitness without making tomorrow worse.

Road back to running

Returning to running is not the same thing as returning to full training. I want the tissue to tolerate easy impact first, then volume, then the spicy stuff.

1. Settle morning irritability
2. Build calf strength and tendon capacity
3. Reintroduce flat easy running first
4. Bring back hills, speed, and racing only once the tendon tolerates elastic loading
5. Morning stiffness matters. If it is climbing, you are probably progressing too fast.

When I want you to get help

Seek help if symptoms persist more than 2 to 4 weeks, if the tendon is rapidly worsening, or if there is any suspicion of a tear or rupture. Red flags I would take seriously include: A sudden pop, immediate weakness, or difficulty pushing off; Marked swelling, bruising, or inability to do a single-leg heel raise; Night pain, fever, or calf swelling that raises a medical concern.

If you are still not coming right, book a consultation with me through our website at

www.kilometerklub.com/get-help