

## The Alfredson Protocol Exercises

The Alfredson protocol for Achilles' tendinopathy is actually two separate exercises.

To perform the exercises, you must have a small step or curb on which to stand. Be sure to check in with your doctor or physical therapist to ensure that it is safe for you to exercise and that you are performing the exercises correctly. Here is how you perform the Alfredson protocol:

- Stand on a step with the balls of your feet on the edge. Your heels should be hanging over the edge of the step.
- Hold onto something stable for balance.
- Keep both knees straight.
- Using both feet, lift your heels and rise up onto the balls of your feet.
- Keep your foot with the painful Achilles' tendon on the step and lift your non-injured foot off the step.
  
- Slowly lower yourself down using your injured ankle. Your heel should move towards the floor, and the ball of your foot should remain in contact with the edge of the step.
- Return your non-injured foot to the step and repeat the exercise.

The Alfredson protocol calls for performing this exercise for 3 sets of 15 repetitions. When performing the exercise with your knees straight, a specific muscle that makes up the Achilles' tendon called the gastrocnemius is loaded and challenged.

Once you perform 3 sets of 15 repetitions with your knees straight on the step, repeat the Alfredson protocol with your knees slightly bent. This places stress upon a specific muscle called the soleus that joins the gastrocnemius to form your Achilles' tendon. Again, perform 3 sets of 15 repetitions.

The two exercises of the Alfredson protocol should be performed twice daily. That means that you should do 3 sets of 15 repetitions of the straight knee and bent knee heel lowering exercises in the morning and in the evening. In total, you should be performing 180 repetitions of the exercise daily.

