



Shock Wave Therapy

What is it and why do I need it?

Shock wave therapy, also referred to as Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy (ESWT), is a promising treatment for tendon injury. Based on lithotripsy that has been used to treat kidney stones for many years, research evidence now supports the use of shock wave therapy in treating common tendon injuries, including Achilles tendinopathy, plantar fasciitis and shoulder calcific tendinopathy. Treatment stimulates healing in chronic tendon injuries that have failed to heal spontaneously and have not responded to other treatments. On average, 60-80% of patients find significant improvement in their tendon pain after treatment.

How does it work?

Shock wave therapy involves non-invasively delivering high frequency shock-waves to the injured tendon, through the skin. A standard course of shock wave therapy involves one treatment each week, for three to four weeks. Some discomfort during the treatment can be expected, however this will subside quickly afterwards, and often pain can be reduced. Strenuous activity should be avoided for 2 days post treatment.

Are there any side effects?

Extensive research has proven ESWT to be a safe treatment option, and this has been widely documented in medical literature. Occasionally some people experience a bruised feeling, discomfort, or skin irritation, however this side effects should subside within a few days of the treatment.

ESWT is not recommended for people with a clotting disorder, who are taking anticoagulant medication, are pregnant, or have inflammation in the treatment area.

Do I need a referral?

No, you do not need a referral however you will need an initial assessment with one of our expert physiotherapists to see if shock wave therapy is suitable for you. During this assessment your medical history, current symptoms, previous treatment and ultrasound images will be considered.

How much does it cost?

The initial shock wave therapy treatment will be to assess the effectiveness of treatment for your particular injury, and will be free of charge. Subsequent treatments will incur a \$50 fee per session, with the potential for a further 2-4 treatments depending on response. If the first treatment is not effective, further shockwave therapy is not indicated and will not be undertaken.