

# Posterior Tibial Tendon Dysfunction (PTTD)

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## What's the problem?

**Tendonitis** is inflammation (irritation) of the tendon. Tendonitis can occur from overusing a tendon. One of the most frequently affected tendons is the posterior tibial tendon. This tendon is normally hard at work, helping to hold up the arch of the foot.

## How does it feel?

The symptoms of tendonitis of the posterior tibial tendon include pain in the arch of the foot and swelling in the area of the tendon. You may have significant pain when walking or standing. The pain may increase the more you are on your feet or at the end of the day. Over time you may have “fallen arches”. **Fallen arches** occur when the posterior tibial tendon is no longer functioning properly.

## How is it diagnosed?

Your doctor will do a physical exam and test the tendon's function and strength level. They may need you to get xrays and a MRI to see the tendon. The xrays will let your doctor see the position of the bones in your foot. The MRI will let your doctor see if there are any tears in the posterior tibial tendon.

## What is the treatment?

Treatment options vary depending on how bad you damaged the tendon. Some people first need a cast on the foot and leg so the tendon can rest and heal.

Your doctor may also:

- Fit you for custom **orthotics** (arch supports) or braces to wear when you are walking in your shoe.

- Prescribe special shoes with extra support in the arch to keep the arch of your foot from collapsing more.
- Discuss physical therapy to help the tendon heal.

If the condition becomes severe and chronic, the doctor may suggest surgery to help with your pain.

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