

# Patient Information: Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT / “shockwave”)

## What is “shockwave”?

Extracorporeal (outside of the body)  
Shockwave (high energy sound waves)  
Therapy is a non-invasive treatment used for chronically painful tendons (and other soft-tissues).

## Conditions suitable for treatment with “shockwave” include:

Plantar fasciopathy (fasciitis)  
Achilles tendinopathy (tendinitis)  
Patellar tendinopathy (tendinitis)  
Trochanteric bursitis (gluteal tendinopathy / greater trochanteric pain syndrome)  
Calcific rotator cuff tendinitis  
Lateral epicondylitis (tennis elbow)

## How does it work?

The shockwaves initiate inflammation within the tissues being treated. This results in increased blood flow and metabolism in the area, which should accelerate the body’s own healing response.



## What does the treatment involve?

“Shockwave” uses a series of high energy pneumatic (compressed air) shockwaves delivered to the problem area via a hand-piece.

The painful area will be located by palpation (touch) and the treatment area will then be marked and gel applied. The treatment is delivered via a hand-piece which is placed on the skin for the length of the procedure. Some noise is created during the treatment and mild to moderate pain can be expected.

Treatment typically takes only 5-10 minutes.

After treatment you may have less pain or no pain at all. A mild dull aching pain may appear a few hours later, which can last for a day or two.

Although you may feel some improvement during the treatment process, healing normally occurs four to six weeks afterwards.

There is no need to alter your daily activities. It is advisable, however, to stop any rehabilitation exercises that you have been given previously until the treatment period is over.

# Patient Information: Extra-corporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT)

You may take simple analgesics (painkillers such as Paracetamol) but **please avoid NSAID's** (anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen, Diclofenac or Naproxen) as these may inhibit the healing response.

ESWT treatment is typically repeated 3 times (1-2 weeks apart) followed by an assessment approximately 6 weeks later.

## Is it suitable for me?

“Shockwave” is suitable for most patients who have chronically painful tendons for a minimum of 9-12 months despite appropriate treatment (physiotherapy, exercises or insoles for example).

Precautions include:

Cardiac pacemaker.

Anti-coagulant therapy (e.g. Warfarin).

Past history of cancer.

Pregnancy.

Treatment within 3 months of a steroid injection to the affected area.

**Please inform the practitioner if any of these apply to you.**

## Risks and/or complications?

Transient pain (during and after the procedure).

Transient numbness.

Transient skin reddening.

Bruising.

Local skin or soft-tissue damage.

Rupture.

## What if I need to contact someone?

### Fracture Clinic –

Tel: 0151 529 2554 (Monday – Friday)

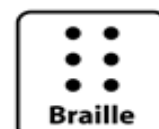
Please leave a message on the answer machine stating your name and contact number and a member of staff will return your call.

### Phil Ellison

Extended Scope Practitioner

Therapies Dept.

Tel: 0151 529 3335 (Monday - Friday)



**If you require a special edition of this leaflet**

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille, on audio tape or disk and in other languages on request. Please contact:

**Tel No: 0151 529 2906**

**Email: [interpretationandtranslation@aintree.nhs.uk](mailto:interpretationandtranslation@aintree.nhs.uk)**