

ACHILLES TENDON RUPTURE REPAIR IN NORTHERN GHANA**Kuubiere, C. B & Abass, A.**Department of Human Biology, School of Medicine and Health Sciences
University for Development Studies, GHANA**ABSTRACT**

The Achilles tendon (Tendo-Calcaneus) is the largest tendon in the human body. As the number of persons who participate in athletics or sports into their later years increases, so has the incidence of overuse injuries to the Achilles tendon. An Achilles tendon rupture, causes considerable morbidity with reduced leg function following the injury. Various treatment techniques do exist for the treatment of an acute Achilles tendon rupture. However, there is no consensus among orthopaedic surgeons regarding the surgical technique and the post-operative rehabilitation programme. Here in Northern Ghana, to the best of our knowledge, there exist no scientific data on Achilles tendon rupture, its management and rehabilitation protocol. This study seeks to evaluate functional outcome results of patients who had undergone open invasive repair for fresh Achilles tendon rupture followed by early rehabilitation programme, at the Tania Specialist Hospital, Tamale, Ghana.

Method: 20 patients who underwent open invasive repair of Achilles tendon rupture from January 2006 -to- December 2007 in Tania Specialist Orthopaedic Hospital, Tamale, Ghana, were independently reviewed with an average follow-up period of 11 months (range 10-12 ,months). The mean age of patients was 35 (range 20 -50 years). A functional rehabilitation protocol based on early range of motion exercises was used postoperatively. The American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society Score (AOFAS) was used to evaluate the outcomes of the patients. Ankle range of motion and thigh, calf and ankle circumference of both legs were compared each time a patient was reviewed; and also when a patient returned to work or sporting activities were evaluated.

Results: No patient (0%) had a re-rupture ,but one patient(5%) had a superficial wound infection, and another one (5%) had a hypertrophic scar. The mean American orthopaedic foot and ankle society score was 93 (80-100) .All patients returned to work at a mean time period of 7 weeks (range 6-8 weeks) and to pre-injury sporting activities mean time of 3.5 months (range 3- 4 months).Ankle circumference measurements did not reveal any significant difference between the leg sizes.

Conclusion: This study attest to the fact that open invasive Achilles tendon repair and early rehabilitation protocol provides satisfactory results, with early return to previous functional status and few complications risks.

Keywords: Achilles Tendon , Rupture, Open Invasive Surgery, Early Rehabilitation.