

Alex Trebek, the famous Jeopardy host, tore his Achilles tendon Wednesday morning after chasing a burglar from his hotel room. He jeopardized his ability to walk due to a sudden foot injury. He tore the achilles tendon with a severe injury that will keep him off of his feet for a while. This type of foot and ankle injury can take a long period of time to recover from.



The Achilles tendon is the strongest flexor of the body. Its main action is to plantarflex the foot or to pull the foot in a downward motion. It is the combination of two large muscles that do this: the gastrocnemius muscle and a small muscle called the Achilles. The two muscles originate from the back of the leg and knee area and join to form the strong Achilles tendon. This tendon travels to the back of the heel bone known as the calcaneus. The attachment is at the back of the heel bone.

Achilles tendon injuries can be very hard to treat and the recovery time can be lengthy if not treated by a specialist such as a podiatrist. The initial feeling of this injury is as though someone took a bat and hit you in the back of the leg. The injury can sometimes be seen as a visible gap in the back of the foot and ankle area. Foot injuries such as this will usually have swelling and black and blue discoloration. The other form is a rupture or a partial rupture. Partial ruptures do not tear the entire portion of the Achilles tendon with a through and through rip. With partial

ruptures of the Achilles tendon you usually don't see a gap in the achilles tendon. You may not even see swelling or bruising.

A quick treatment plan by a specialist, such as a podiatrist, can evaluate the patient with x-rays and possibly a diagnostic ultrasound. It might also be necessary to order an mri to better evaluate this type of foot and ankle injury. Treatment totally depends on severity. Treatment options range from casts, ankle or leg braces, custom bracing and sometimes surgery. In most cases a foot specialist can evaluate and effectively treat this type of injury without surgery.

If you or someone you know suffers from pain in the Achilles tendon area and possibly has a traumatic injury, please feel free to contact us. We always have emergency slots in our schedule for problematic foot and ankle injuries such as this.