

Haglund's Deformity

Haglund's deformity is a bony prominence at the back of the heel. Pressure from a firm shoe back can irritate nearby tissue and a bursa, a small cushioning sac near the Achilles tendon. The area may become painful, swollen, or red.

Check the source of heel pain

Your clinician can examine the heel and may use X-rays to assess the bone. Pain in this area can also involve the Achilles tendon, so the bump alone does not explain every symptom.

Reduce shoe pressure

A shoe with a soft back may reduce rubbing. Your clinician may suggest a heel lift, padding, an insert, or a temporary change in activity. Ask which exercises suit your tendon and heel symptoms rather than forcing painful stretches.

Nonsurgical care aims to reduce irritation and discomfort. It does not remove the bony bump. If symptoms remain limiting, a specialist can discuss other options, including whether surgery is appropriate.

Watch for a sudden change

A sudden pop behind the ankle with new weakness or difficulty pushing off may indicate an Achilles tear. Stop activity and seek prompt assessment instead of treating it as ordinary shoe irritation.

Related reading

- Achilles Tendon Injuries
- Ankle Arthritis

Sources and further information

- American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons: Haglund's deformity
- AAOS: Achilles tendon rupture

This handout provides general education. Your treating clinician can explain how it applies to your injury.