

On your feet: Gelita's collagen peptide promotes the healing of tendons, study finds

21 Feb 2019 --- A specific bioactive collagen peptide may reduce pain and functional limitations in people suffering from Achilles tendon injury when combined with a rehabilitation program. This is according to a new study from the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), published in *Nutrients*. The double-blind, placebo-controlled study used Tendoforte, Gelita's recent addition to its Bioactive Collagen Peptides portfolio. As consumers continue to engage in a higher number of sporting activities, as well as more intense regimes, nutritional strategies to strengthen connective tissue are needed, notes Gelita.

The study participants had a long history of Achilles tendinopathy and were not responding to previous physiotherapy regimes. However, after receiving the collagen peptide, 12 out of 18 participants were able to resume running-related activities.

"The participants returning to running so fast selected was a pleasant surprise. They were non-respondents to traditional Achilles tendinopathy therapies, making their recovery more challenging. Even so, they were able to return to running in only three months and were able to maintain a running routine thereafter, without the re-incidence of injuries," Oliver Wolf, Global Marketing and Communication at Gelita, tells **NutritionInsight**.

"Tendoforte contains specific, physiologically active peptides, that are partially absorbed in intact form and as such target the cells in tendons and ligaments, activating their protein biosynthesis machinery to make new collagen and other extracellular matrix proteins. It is a functional, bioactive effect from a very specific peptide Gelita obtains from collagen, that has beneficial biological activity," Wolf explains.



In combination with calf-strengthening exercises twice a day, the participants were given a maltodextrin-based placebo or Tendoforte, for six months. The first group received specific collagen peptides for the first three months before crossing over to the placebo, whereas the second group received the placebo first before crossing over to the specific collagen peptides.

At baseline and after three and six months, all subjects were requested to rate their subjective Achilles tendon pain and functional limitations using a Victorian Institute of Sports Assessment-Achilles (VISA-A) questionnaire. Scores increased significantly in group one compared with group two. After

crossing over, both groups showed significant improvements.

The authors concluded that oral supplementation with specific collagen peptides may accelerate the clinical benefits of a well-structured calf-strengthening and return-to-running program. Essentially, the risk of injury decreases considerably while flexibility improves.

"We recommend 5g of Tendoforte daily, ideally one hour before exercise. The exercise can either be physical therapy, daily activity, or normal training, as Tendoforte can also be used to protect tendons and ligaments from general overuse," notes Wolf.

The results of the study add to previous research on Tendoforte, which examined the ability of the peptide to reduce ankle sprains and improve ankle stability. Six months of supplementation with the specific collagen peptide resulted in significant improvements in ankle stability, reduced ankle sprains and a reduced re-injury rate in the three-month follow-up period, suggesting long-term injury protection with Tendoforte.

"These studies reveal Tendoforte as the very first nutritional solution that goes to the root of the problem. Its bioactivity influences tenocyte cell metabolism, promoting the natural, sustained healing process," says Suzane Leser, Director of Nutrition Communication at Gelita.

"The incidence of overuse injury in sports has risen, not only because of the greater participation in recreational and competitive sports but also as a result of the increased duration and intensity of training, creating a real need for nutritional strategies to strengthen the connective tissue," she adds.

The peptide may be incorporated into a variety of food and drink products, according to Wolf. It is a natural protein with a neutral odor and taste, clean label and good solubility.

"In addition to its proven efficacy, Tendoforte can work well in synergy with a wide variety of other ingredients, exhibiting no negative nutrient-drug or nutrient-nutrient interactions, no history of adverse events in clinical studies, and very low allergenicity," he adds.

Gelita is currently looking into the other possible benefits of the peptide ingredient, not only related to injuries but also related to performance benefits derived from a strong and healthy connective tissue, concludes Wolf.

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AIS Study – participants starting with TENDOFORTE[®] supplementation returned to running, faster

