Reviewer's report

Title: Achilles tendon rupture following surgical management for tendinopathy: a case report.

Version: 2 Date: 5 November 2006

Reviewer: Jon Karlsson

Reviewer's report:

General

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Comments to authors

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The Introduction is brief, but covers the most important issues anyway. One important question is why they did the study? Please clarify why it is of interest to publish information about this particular case. For instance, are the authors able share a revised post-operative protocol with the readers?

The authors claim that ..."Achilles tendinopathy is a failed healing process response process involving..." Do they really know this? As far as I know, the pathological changes in Achilles tendons with tendinopathy are not very well know. Please rewrite.

The authors mention conservative methods; please give a short note about the clinical outcome. They also (in the next paragraph) mention surgical exploration; however, it should be born in mind that surgical exploration is not frequently used today and this should be mentioned.

2. CASE REPORT

The Case Report is well written, and not too long. It is very clear what was done and why.

A few issues should be clarified.

1. The authors state that the …"ailment was managed conservatively"… please give a short description of how this was done
2. Why use a below knee cast? Surely, this is almost never used nowadays?
3. Why percutaneous repair?
4. The authors claim that they were dealing with a total Achilles tendon rupture, but how do they really know, bearing in mind that the surgery was done without looking at the tendon, i.e. percutaneous? I fail to understand this, please clarify.

3. DISCUSSION

The Discussion is also well written and includes the most important issues.

A few issues should be reconsidered.

1. The discussion section should start with a short sentence, where the most important results are summarised.
2. Limitations of the study are not discussed; please reconsider. This is important, even though we are dealing with a case report only.
3. The authors claim that …"the effectiveness of the exercise programmes (eccentric protocols) have
recently been questioned"... but, this is a bit strong and is based on only one study. Please modify.
4. Surgery does not always lead to good results, far from it. Please modify this statement and be more modest. Also, the rehabilitation period after surgery is almost always very long (6-12 months) and this might be mentioned as a possible limitation of surgical treatment.
5. Please mention that there are several surgical methods and it not sure that removal of degenerated tissue is the best one. RCTs are lacking here.
6. At the end of the Discussion section, the authors mention (for the first time) that bilateral exploration was done. In fact this should have been a part of the case report itself, please rewrite.
7. There is no real conclusion. Maybe, this is not possible? But it would be fine if the authors could give the readers some clue how the post-operative protocol should be modified.

4. CONCLUSIONS
There is no formal Conclusion section. Please add.

5. ABSTRACT
The abstract is far too short and must be rewritten. A short outline of the case, as well as treatment and outcome must be given. This must be changed in the revised manuscript.

6. TITLE
The title is appropriate.

7. FIGURES
There are 2 figures and both are good. However, the figure showing the percutaneous suture does not give any additional scientific information, and should therefore be deleted.

8. REFERENCES
References are in good order, but quite many for such limited information.

9. TABLES
There are no tables.

1. Table 1 should be deleted.
2. Table 2 must be kept. In fact, it contains all the important information.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'