

Radial Pressure Wave Therapy

What is radial pressure wave (RPW) therapy?

RPW therapy is a way to reduce pain and temporarily increase blood flow in the cells of damaged tissue. It may help repair and rebuild connective tissue, such as tendons and ligaments.

During RPW therapy, shock waves are produced by a projectile that is moved by compressed air. When the projectile hits a plate inside the applicator, it creates a wave that radiates (spreads) through the area—much like the ripples created when a rock is dropped into water.

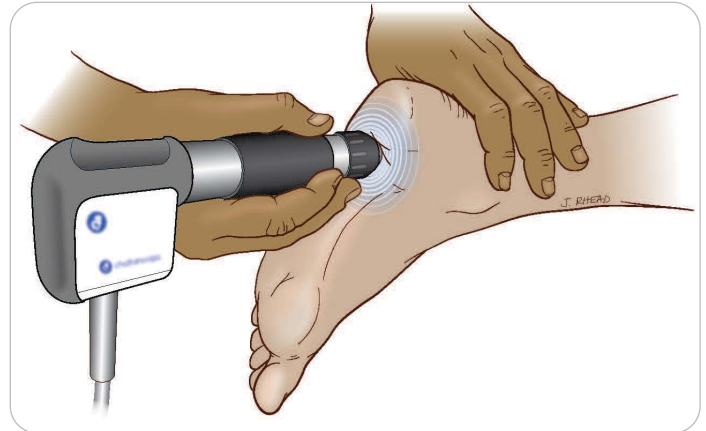
Why should I consider RPW therapy?

Soft tissue and minor tendon conditions have been shown to improve with RPW therapy when used with exercise therapy. Some conditions that may respond well to this therapy include plantar [PLAN-tar] fasciitis [fash-ee-EYE-tiss] and Achilles [ah-KILL-eez] tendinopathy [ten-din-AH-puh-thee].

How do I prepare for RPW therapy?

Let your physical therapist know if:

- You could be pregnant
- Are taking any blood thinning medications (including a daily aspirin)
- Have any blood clotting disorders
- Have had a cortisone injection within the past 6 weeks



What can I expect?

Your therapist will:

- Help you get into position
- Feel for and note the most tender areas.
- Spread a gel on your skin in the area to be treated. The applicator is placed over the gel.

As the treatment begins, you will hear a loud, rapid tapping sound and notice a thumping feeling.

Treatment should take less than 5 to 10 minutes. You may need 3 to 6 treatments spaced 4 to 5 days between sessions.

For best results, RPW therapy should be done in combination with other treatments, including manual therapy, exercise, and stretching.

Possible side effects include swelling, redness, or bruising at the treatment area. In some cases, you may have a mild increase in pain. Generally, any side effects go away 2 to 5 days.

Questions for my therapist