



**Barrhaven Chiropractic Health Centre**

## **The “itis” Conditions Demystified**

**By: Dr. Franco Vincelli**

Anyone who has ever experienced an injury resulting in muscle, tendon, or joint pain has probably been diagnosed with some sort of “itis.” The most classic examples include rotator cuff tendonitis, tennis elbow or lateral epicondylitis, plantar fasciitis, bursitis and the list goes on and on. “Itis” is a suffix used to indicate inflammation of a structure (i.e. inflammation of the tonsils is tonsillitis) which can be a very accurate diagnosis. The real issue lies in those individuals diagnosed with an “itis” but in actuality have an “osis.” “Itis”, “osis”, “potatoe”, “patatoe”, what’s the difference? Studies have shown that, in many cases, individuals diagnosed with “itis” conditions lack the presence of inflammatory cells. According to our definition, if there are no inflammatory cells present, then how is the condition classified as an “itis”? And more importantly if this isn’t an inflammatory problem then are you getting the proper treatment?

“Osis” conditions, such as tendinosis or fasciosis are commonly a result of micro trauma. The micro trauma results in an inflammatory process which resolves, leading to the production of degenerative cells, tissue changes, calcification and eventually structural failure. The importance in differentiating between “itis” and “osis” conditions lies with the difference in treatment. Conventional methods aimed to reduce inflammation in “itis” conditions, with the use of steroidal and/or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories are largely ineffective for the treatment of “osis” conditions.

Effective treatment for “osis” conditions focuses on soft tissue therapy like Active Release Techniques (ART®) to help release tension within the structures, exercises focusing on eccentric loading and endurance, stretching, the preservation of mobility and most importantly the correction of any biomechanical flaws. Also, there is some evidence for the use of therapeutic ultrasound to help stimulate tissue synthesis.

The differences in the two conditions above emphasize the importance of a proper diagnosis in managing a condition properly and efficiently. Something as simple as a suffix can have a huge effect on the prognosis of ones conditions and can be the difference between a few weeks of treatment compared to a few months or even years.