Appendix 1. Search strategies conducted on 13 February 2019.

OVID (Medline, AMED, Embase and Cochrane)

1. Randomised controlled trial*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
2. Randomized Controlled Trial.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
3. Random allocation.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
4. Comparative Stud*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
5. Controlled Clinical Trial*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
6. Double-blind method*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
7. Single-blind method*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
8. Clinical Trial*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
9. Crossover stud*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
10. Animal/ not human/
11. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9
12. 11 not 10
13. Tendin*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
14. Jumper* knee*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
15. Inferior patellar pole.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
16. Tendon injur*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
17. Tenosynovit*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
18. Peritendin*.mp. [mp=ab, hw, kw, ti, ot, tx, ct, sh, tn, dm, mf, dv, nm, kf, px, rx, an, ui]
19. 13 or 14 or 15 or 16 or 17 or 18
20. 12 and 19

PEDro

1. Abstract & Title: tend*
2. Therapy: not applicable
3. Problem: pain
4. Body Part: lower leg or knee
5. Subdiscipline: not applicable
6. Topic: not applicable
7. Method: clinical trials
8. Author/Association: not applicable
9. Title Only: not applicable
10. Source: not applicable
11. Published Since: not applicable
12. New records added since: not applicable
13. Score of at least: not applicable

Ebsco (SportDiscus and CINAHL)

1. S1 AND S2
2. tendin* OR jumper* knee* OR inferior patellar pole OR tendon injur* OR tenosynovit* OR peritendin*
3. randomised controlled trial* OR randomized controlled trial* OR crossover stud* OR comparative stud* OR controlled trial*

Appendix 2 – Formula used to combine the groups of conservative treatment in Rigby, Mortensen & Draper [23] and Kongsgaard et al. [26]

	Group 1 (e.g. males)	Group 2 (e.g. females)	Combined groups
Sample size	N_1	N_2	$N_1 + N_2$
Mean	M_1	M_2	$\frac{N_1M_1 + N_2M_2}{N_1 + N_2}$
SD	SD_1	SD_2	$\sqrt{\frac{(N_1 - 1)SD_1^2 + (N_2 - 1)SD_2^2 + \frac{N_1N_2}{N_1 + N_2}(M_1^2 + M_2^2 - 2M_1M_2)}{N_1 + N_2 - 1}}$

Appendix 3. Extracted data.

	≤ 3 months						> 3 months					
	Conservative Treatment			Comparison			Conservative Treatment			Comparison		
Study	Mean	SD	Sample	Mean	SD	Sample	Mean	SD	Sample	Mean	SD	Sample
***Function (VISA-P)* (conservative vs minimal or non-intervention)**												
†Rigby, Mortensen & Draper [23]	85.2	5.9	21	83	8.1	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
‡Taunton, Taunton & Khan [36]	61.4	15.9	10	53.2	18.7	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zwerver et al. [35]	66.7	17.5	30	68.9	20.3	27	70.5	18.9	30	72.7	18.0	27
Function (VISA-P) (conservative vs other intervention)												
Dragoo et al. [25]	52	20.3	12	66.4	20.2	9	83.9	9.0	6	67.8	21.9	8
Kongsgaard et al. [26]	76.5	12.9	25	82	19	12	81.5	13.70	20	64	22	11
Vetrano et al. [34]	71.3	19.1	23	76.2	16.5	23	77.6	19.9	23	91.3	9.9	23
Pain (conservative vs minimal or non-intervention)												
†Rigby, Mortensen & Draper [23]	4.2	1.9	21	8.8	1.9	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zwerver et al. [35]	2.2	2.2	30	2.9	2.5	27	2.1	2.5	30	2.3	2.5	27
Pain (conservative vs other intervention)												
Dragoo et al. [25]	2.3	1.6	12	1.7	1.7	9	0.3	0.5	6	1.7	1.5	8
*Kongsgaard et al. [26]	2.6	2.3	25	1.9	2.3	12	1.8	1.8	20	3.3	3.1	11
Vetrano et al. [34]	3.9	1.9	23	3.2	1.8	23	3.2	2.4	23	1.5	1.7	23
Function (combined conservative treatment)												
Thijs et al. [24]	65.7	17.3	22	71.5	21.7	30	70.9	17.7	22	78.2	15.8	30
Steunebrink et al. [37]	73.0	15.3	16	73.7	20.7	17	75.0	16.2	15	80.7	22.1	15

Warden et al. [38]	69.8	14.5	13	69.2	17.9	14	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pain (combined conservative treatment)												
Thijs et al. [24]	2.0	1.5	22	2.9	2.5	30	1.8	1.8	22	2.2	2.3	30
Steunebrink et al. [37]	6.6	2.0	16	6.6	3.7	17	6.6	3.0	15	7.8	3.1	15
Warden et al. [38]	3.8	2.3	13	3.9	2.2	14	-	-	-	-	-	-

SD = standard deviation; * transformed to a 0–10 scale; † SD estimated based on confidence interval; ‡ SD estimated based on mean of other studies

Appendix 4 - GRADE

	GRADE SHORT-TERM			**GRADE LONG-TERM**		
	Imprecision (n<300)	Risk of bias (Pedro <5)	Conclusion	Imprecision (n<300)	Risk of bias (Pedro <5)	Conclusion
FUNCTION						
Conservative x MI	Y (n=108)	Y=1.6	very-low	Y (n=57)	N=9	low-quality
Conservative x OI	Y (n=104)	N=6.3	low-quality	Y (n=91)	N = 6.3	low-quality
Combined conservative treatment	Y (n=112)	N=8	low-quality	Y (n=82)	N = 7.5	low-quality
PAIN						
Conservative x MI	Y (n=88)	N=6.5	low-quality	Y (n=57)	N=9	low-quality
Conservative x OI	Y (n=104)	N=6.3	low-quality	Y (n=91)	N = 6.3	low-quality
Combined conservative treatment	Y (n=112)	N=8	low-quality	Y (n=82)	N = 7.5	low-quality
SPECIFIC CONSERVATIVE THERAPY						
Rigby, Mortensen & Draper [23]	Y (n=31)	Y=4	very low-quality	-	-	-
Kongsgaard et al. [26]	-	-	-	Y (n=37)	N= 6	low-quality
Vetrano et al. [34]	-	-	-	Y (n=46)	N= 5	low-quality
Dragoo et al. [25]	-	-	-	Y (n=21)	N= 8	low-quality