

Braves place Acuña on IL with Achilles inflammation

BY DAVE SKRETTA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Atlanta Braves put five-time All-Star Ronald Acuña Jr. on the 10-day injured list with right Achilles tendon inflammation Wednesday, though the exact severity of the injury to the slugging outfielder may not be known until additional testing is done.

The Braves recalled outfielder Jarred Kelenic from Triple-A Gwinnett to take his place on the roster.

Acuña first experienced discomfort in his calf area Monday night, when he scored from first on Austin Riley's double to help the Braves to a 10-7 victory over Kansas City. Acuña lobbied to play on Tuesday night and Braves manager Brian Snitker assented, only for Acuña to come up limping while trying to chase down a ball in right field in an eventual 9-6 loss.

"It happened when I scored from first to home on that play," Acuña explained after the game, speaking through an interpreter. "They are going to examine me (Wednesday) so we'll see how it goes."

Even after he came up limping, Acuña wanted to remain in the game. He



Charlie Riedel/AP photo

Atlanta Braves' Ronald Acuna Jr. celebrates after scoring on a three-run double hit by Austin Riley during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Kansas City Royals on Monday in Kansas City, Mo.

headed out to his position in the field but saw Eli White trotting out to replace him. That Acuña was able to jog into the dugout at least generated some optimism that the injury to the Achilles

tendon was not a complete tear and he could be back this season.

"I was kind of out there hoping they wouldn't hit it my way and of course any time you do that, they always

hit it your way," Acuña said.

"I told them (about the pain Monday) and everyone said: 'Take the day if you want it. You can have the day off.' I've missed so much time already through injuries I didn't want to miss any more time."

Acuña, the National League MVP in 2023, has dealt with injuries for much of his career. He missed time as a rookie in 2018 with a sprained left knee ligament, then tore the ACL in his right knee to end his 2021 season. Last year, he pivoted awkwardly as he was taking his lead on the bases and wound up tearing the ACL in his left knee, ending his season after 49 games.

Only twice in eight seasons has Acuña managed to play more than 119 games.


After missing the start of this season, Acuña returned May 23 and began playing at an All-Star level again. He was hitting .306 with 14 homers and 26 RBIs in 55 games, including a 2-for-4 night with a homer against the Royals on Monday night.

"It's an injury, I'm worried," Acuña said of the latest issue,

which comes amid a season in which Atlanta has been devastated by injuries — particularly to its starting rotation. "It's more pain, but it feels kind of — I feel it a lot when I try to put pressure on it."

Kelenic, the sixth overall pick of Seattle in the 2018 amateur player draft, has struggled to live up to his potential. He hit .231 with 15 home runs and 45 RBIs in 131 games for Atlanta last season but was sent to Gwinnett in April of this season, after he hit .167 with two homers and just two RBIs over the first 23 games with the Braves.

White is expected to be Acuña's primary replacement. He is hitting .255 with four homers and 18 RBIs in 72 games.



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