

# Tiny Organ That Protects Muscles Discovered at U. C.

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University of California scientists have discovered a tiny sensory organ that acts as a traffic cop, protecting the body from muscle damage when it is under stress.

The organ is in the muscle tendon, which joins the muscle to the structure it operates.

It goes into action when the muscle is stretched and pulling a heavy load, making further stress impossible and preventing the individual from exerting additional effort that could break the tendon.

Most of the time the organ protects the body from damage,

the scientists found. It breaks down when muscular actions come so fast the nerve signals fail to reach the warning device in time to protect the tendon.

The discovery comes from a study that may result in improved methods of strengthening muscles in physical-therapy exercises and equipment.

The work was reported by Drs. Benjamin Libet, associate professor of physiology, and Bertram Feinstein, instructor in neurological surgery, and electronics technician E. Wright Jr.