

PLANTAR FASCIITIS



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

Plantar fasciitis is an inflammation (red, sore, swollen) of the plantar fascia. The plantar fascia is a thick band of tissue on the bottom of the foot. It extends from the heel bone to the base of the toes. Plantar refers to the sole of the foot. Fascia describes thin, fibrous, supportive tissue. Plantar fasciitis can affect anyone, of any age, no matter their fitness level. It is a common foot problem, and is different from heel spurs. But, a person may have both of these foot problems at the same time.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Pain and tenderness in the heel and sole of the foot under the heel bone.
- Pain often occurs after resting or after rising in the morning. There may be no pain when sitting.
- One or both feet can be affected.
- It hurts worse when running faster or when weight is on the ball of the foot.

CAUSES

Overuse or stress to the foot causes the plantar fascia to become stretched, irritated, and inflamed.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- People over age 40. Women more often than men.
- Athletes who overtrain, wear improper shoes, or fail to warm up).
- Running, jumping, or walking on hard surfaces.
- Having flat feet or high arches.
- Previous foot or ankle injury.
- Wearing high heeled, poorly fitting, or worn-out shoes.
- Being on the feet for many hours a day.
- Overweight.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Wear proper footwear for sports, exercise, and work.
- Do stretching exercises for the Achilles tendon (tendon from the heel to the calf).
- With any new exercise or sport, build up your pace gradually. Warm up before exercise.
- Maintain a healthy weight for your height.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Usually curable for most people. Different types of treatment work for different people. Complete healing may take from weeks to months. Other methods of treatment are being studied and may be available in the future.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Pain continues which may cause limping and other walking problems. This can limit everyday activities as well as sports and fitness activities.



DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Your health care provider will examine your foot and ankle and ask about your symptoms. The bottom of your foot will be touched and pressed to identify the cause of the pain. X-rays and other tests may be done to check for other disorders.
- There are a variety of treatment options. Follow your health care provider's advice. Basic ideas are listed here.
- Massage an ice pack over the painful area. Do this for 15 minutes, 3 or 4 times a day, and after activities.
- Before getting out of bed, use a towel to pull toes back toward the ankle. Count to 10, and do it 10 times.
- While sitting, grab a towel with your toes or roll your foot back and forth over a can of frozen juice. Stand on the ball of your foot on the edge of a step and raise and lower leg.
- Try heel cushions or arch supports. Use them in both shoes so other problems don't develop. Custom orthotics (special shoe inserts) may be prescribed.
- Taping helps some people. Apply athletic tape as directed on the product's instructions.
- Night splints are products that keep the muscles stretched while sleeping. They may help.
- Buy shoes that fit well. Sandals help some people.
- If other treatments fail after 6 months, shock wave therapy (nonsurgical) or surgery may be options.

MEDICATIONS

- For minor pain and inflammation, use nonprescription drugs, such as ibuprofen or aspirin (if over age 18).
- Steroids may be injected into the foot.

ACTIVITY

Stay off your feet as much as possible until symptoms are better. Try swimming or cycling for exercising.

DIET

If your weight is a problem, begin a weight-loss diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has symptoms of plantar fasciitis.
- Symptoms don't improve despite treatment.

Special notes:

More notes on the back of this page