

PLANTAR FASCIITIS

Foot pain when you get out of bed?



A step-by-step guide to causes, concerns and proper treatment for your feet

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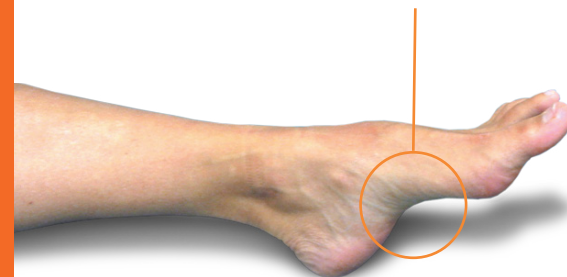
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Plantar Fasciitis

Why is morning pain common?

At rest, the arch is in a relaxed and shortened position. Upon getting out of bed and standing, the scar tissue is then stretched more than it's used to, causing the morning pain.

Contracted, shortened
arch at rest



WHAT IS PLANTAR FASCIITIS?

Plantar fasciitis is the structural breakdown of the plantar fascia resulting from excessive stress/tension on the ligament. The plantar fascia is a thick fibrous band of tissue that originates from the heel and fans across the bottom of the foot in a v-shape. It maintains the shape of the arch of your foot.



Injured plantar fascia

SYMPTOMS

Plantar fasciitis is a common foot problem characterized by pain under the heel or arch on one or both of your feet. It starts as a dull ache, which may become more painful if left untreated. Other symptoms include sharp heel or arch pain during your first few steps in the morning, or with increased walking, running and sports activities.

CAUSES

- **Foot Mechanics:** Flat, pronated feet can stretch the plantar fascia, while high, arched and rigid feet naturally possess a tight plantar fascia. As a result, plantar fasciitis can occur in nearly any foot type.
- **Muscular Factors:** Tight calf muscles pull more on the heel bone, which strains the plantar fascia.
- **Activities:** Carrying heavy loads, especially on hard surfaces, or standing for long periods can all create additional plantar fascia strain.
- **Footwear:** High heels or worn-out shoes with a flexible forefoot can cause increased stress on the plantar fascia and intrinsic foot muscles.
- **Individual:** Weight gain and increasing age also place you at a greater risk.

TREATMENTS

Early treatment is essential. You should combine as many treatments as possible for the quickest, most effective recovery.

1. **Stretching / massage** are key (see next panel)
2. **Proper Footwear** with a deep heel counter and a strong forefoot rocker helps accelerate healing.
3. **Custom Foot Orthotics** help alleviate stress on the plantar fascia from sports and daily activities, and can prevent the condition from recurring.
4. **Rest / activity modification** is extremely important. Use pain as your guide: If your feet hurt while standing or walking, limit the time spent on your feet.
5. **Pain management:** Ice the area under the heel and arch several times a day - especially after prolonged standing, walking and activity - to reduce inflammation and enable proper healing. Medication such as anti-inflammatory pills (NSAID's) may be prescribed by your doctor to reduce inflammation.
6. **Physiotherapy**, massage therapy, and acupuncture can also help with recovery.

SPORTS MEDICINE PRODUCTS

- **Over the counter arch supports** may also help in reducing the tension on the plantar fascia. Always wear them in pairs.
- **Gel heel cushions** can help by absorbing the shock and ease the pressure on the heel, especially for those with high arched, rigid feet.
- **Night splints** help the foot heal in a stretched position while you sleep, reducing morning pain.



REHABILITATION

Daily rehabilitation of the plantar fascia is key as it increases tissue flexibility and helps prevent fraying or tearing. Use these stretches, movements and massage techniques to help activate intrinsic foot muscles and restore the plantar fascia structure.

Gastrocnemius Stretch



Step one foot forward and elevate your forefoot against a step or wall while keeping your heel on the ground. With your front leg straight, lean forward slightly until you feel a stretch in your calf. Hold and repeat on the other side.

3 sets / 30 sec

Standing One-Legged Balance



Stand shoulder width apart and balance on one foot for one minute. Once you are confident with balancing with your eyes open, do the exercise with your eyes closed.

Hold for 1 minute

Plantar Fascia Massage



Use a massage ball to apply pressure to your arch, near the ball of your foot, and hold for 10-30 sec. You should feel a deep tissue massage but no pain. Repeat at multiple points working towards your heel.

1 set / 10-30 sec per spot

Forefoot Extension



Stand shoulder width apart and place one foot ahead of the other. Contract the calf muscle of your back leg and raise your heel until you have lifted onto your forefoot. The stretch should be felt through the plantar fascia at the arch of your back foot.

5 sets / 15 repetitions

Download the full Plantar Fasciitis Recovery Guide at

www.kintec.net/pf-guide