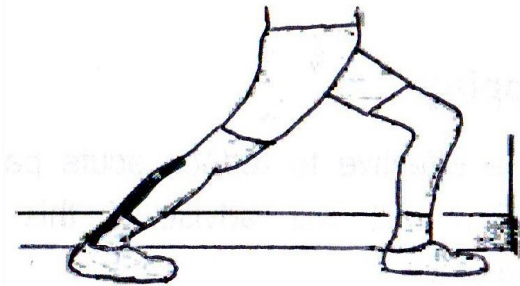


## Stretching

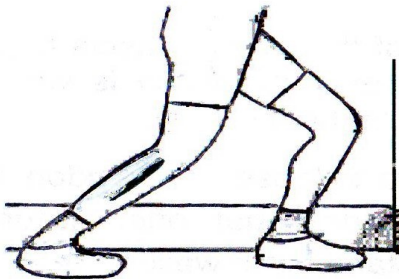
This is designed to relax the tissues that surround the heel bone.

To do this stretch, stand straight with your hands against a wall and your injured leg slightly behind your other leg. Keeping your heels flat on the floor, both feet pointed straight ahead, slowly bend the front knee.



Stretching the top muscle

Next stretch, follow the above but with your back leg slightly bent.



Stretching the deeper muscle

You should feel the stretch in the middle of your calf. Hold the stretch for up to 30 seconds. Repeat the stretch 6 times twice daily.

## How long will it take for me to be pain free?

The advice in this leaflet can help to reduce pain and discomfort in most patients.

Patients can find some relief from pain within 3 months and over 90% of these can be pain free within one year.

**Be forewarned that the symptoms do not always resolve quickly and can last 9 – 12 months.**

Any questions please ask your Podiatrist

## Comments, concerns or complaints?

If you have any comments, concerns or complaints and would like to speak to somebody about them please telephone:

**01773 525119**

## Are we accessible to you?

This publication is available on request in other formats (for example, large print, easy read, Braille or audio version) and languages. For free translation and/or other format please telephone:

**01773 824171 ext. 5587**, or email us at:

[communications@dchs.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@dchs.nhs.uk)

**Community Podiatry Services**

**(Biomechanics Group)**

# A Guide to Plantar Fasciitis



Heel pain is one of the most common forms of foot pain in adults. The heel bone (calcaneus) is the largest bone in the foot and the heel is the first part of the foot to contact the ground during walking.

## What is Plantar Fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis occurs because of irritation to the thick band of tissue called the plantar fascia. This runs from the heel bone to the ball of the foot, and helps to maintain the arch of the foot.

As you walk or run the plantar fascia plays a large role in the transfer of weight from the heel to the ball of the foot. Therefore, the stress placed on the tissue is tremendous, which can cause inflammation and scarring.



## How does it present?

The sole of the foot hurts near the inside of the foot where the heel and arch meet. Pain is commonly felt in the heel on first standing in the morning and after resting then standing. Arch pain may also be present.

Tightening of the plantar fascia happens in particular over night which is why pain is often worse in the morning.

As you begin to loosen the tendon, the pain usually subsides, but often returns with prolonged standing or walking.

## What are the causes?

There are many reasons for increased stress on the plantar fascia:-

- Flat feet (excessively pronated)
- High arched feet (excessively supinated)
- Tightness in calf muscles
- Injury or bruising of the fatty pad which protects the plantar fascia
- Prolonged standing/ working on hard floors
- Irritation of the nerve that supplies the foot
- Poor footwear with little support or cushioning.

## What are the treatments?

The below can help to reduce pain levels and discomfort:-

### Rest

Resting as much as possible reducing activity levels e.g. taking a few days off jogging or reducing standing or walking for long periods.

### Ice

Using ice can help to reduce some of the symptoms especially after a painful episode. Use an ice pack, or frozen peas wrapped in a wet towel and place on the area for up to 20 minutes, at least 4 times a day.

## Massage

Massage the area before getting out of bed in the morning and the end of the day, an alternative is rolling the area with a golf ball or massage area using anti-inflammatory gel (ibuprofen gel), read the packaging for details or consult GP / Pharmacist.

## Insoles

If there is found to be a problem with the structure of the foot, insoles can be manufactured which can help to reduce pain levels or discomfort.

Try heel cushions and cushioned soled supportive footwear.

## Strapping

Can be effective to reduce acute pain. The Podiatrist will advise if this is appropriate.

## Others

Sometimes other treatments are needed, such as:-

Work / sport activity reduction, anti-inflammatories, steroid injection, acupuncture, night splints, surgery.