Welcome to Queensferry Podiatry

Established in 1999, we have dedicated over 25 years to providing a professional and welcoming podiatry service. Our expertise includes:

- **Routine issues, such as nail problems, hard skin and corns.**
- **Diabetic foot care and check-ups.**
- **Musculoskeletal problems.**
- **Orthotic fitting.**
- **Nail surgery.**

- Our podiatrists are degree trained.
- Registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC).
- Members of the Royal College of Podiatrists.

Individual Advice:

hcpc registered
www.hcpc-uk.org

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For additional details and booking information, please scan the QR code.



Heel Bursitis



Guidance for Patients

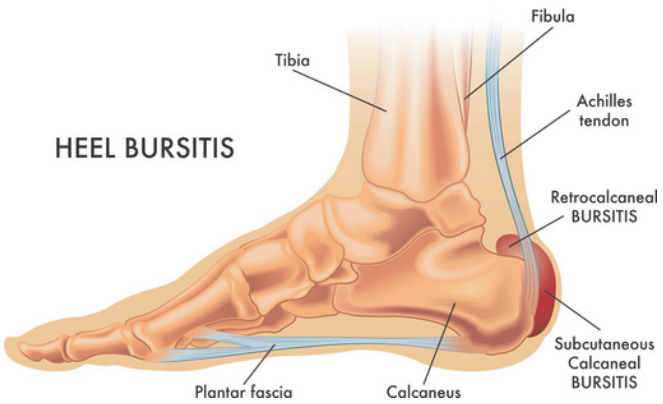
Queensferry Podiatry

www.queensferrypodiatry.com

What is Bursitis?

Bursitis is the inflammation and swelling of a bursa. A bursa is a fluid-filled sac which forms under the skin, usually over the joints, and acts as a cushion between the tendons and bones; it is basically like a blister, but one that sits deep beneath the skin.

Bursitis can also occur across the body in the hip, elbow and knees. In the feet, bursitis is commonly found at the back of the heel, under the heel, and at the side of a bunion.



Types of Bursitis

There are two main types of heel bursitis:

- Retrocalcaneal bursitis. This is the more common type. It happens when the bursa between your heel bone and Achilles tendon becomes inflammed. It's also known as Achilles tendon bursitis.
- Subcutaneous calcaneal bursitis. This type of heel bursitis occurs when the bursa between your skin and Achilles tendon becomes inflammed.

What Causes It?

The most common cause is excessive compression or pressure on the bursa. This can happen in a number of ways:

- Tight or stiff shoes that rub against the lower heel area.
- A direct knock to the area.
- Excessive stretching – calf and Achilles stretches pull the tendon tight over the heel bone, which compresses the bursa. This is usually fine, but very strong or prolonged stretches can cause trouble.
- Switching to flatter footwear too quickly.
- A sudden increase in uphill running or walking.
- The shape of your foot arch: people with high arches are naturally more prone to heel bursitis, because the lower part of the Achilles tendon sits closer to the heel bone, making it more sensitive to overstretching or sudden footwear changes.
- The shape of your heel bone – a Haglund's deformity (an extra bony bump at the back of the heel) can also increase your susceptibility to bursitis.

Symptoms

Heel bursitis symptoms may include:

- Pain and swelling in or behind your heel.
- Tenderness.
- Increased pain when standing on your toes.
- Warmth around your heel and the surrounding area.
- Change in skin color around your heel.

What Can Help?

To help prevent bursitis, there are several small things that can have a big impact.

- Don't wear shoes that are too tight or have a stiff heel. Wear shoes with a U- or V-shaped indentation in the back collar to protect your Achilles tendon.
- Rest – try not to move the joint too much and avoid activities that put pressure on it.
- Use ice – gently hold an ice pack (or a bag of frozen peas) wrapped in a tea towel on the area for around 10 minutes at a time and repeat every few hours during the day.
- Take painkillers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, to ease any pain.
- It may also help to put extra cushions around the affected joint while you sleep, to help protect and support it.

Treatments

Treatments for bursitis may include:

- Antibiotics – usually taken for at least 7 days if bursitis is caused by an infection.
- A steroid injection given into the affected joint to reduce the swelling – this will not be done if bursitis is caused by an infection.
- Taking fluid from the joint using a needle (aspiration) to ease symptoms.
- If bursitis is severe or keeps coming back, the inflammed bursa may need to be surgically drained or even removed (but this is rare).