

Our highly skilled podiatrists

are registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and members of the College of Podiatrists. The practice is accredited by the College of Podiatrists (CoP).

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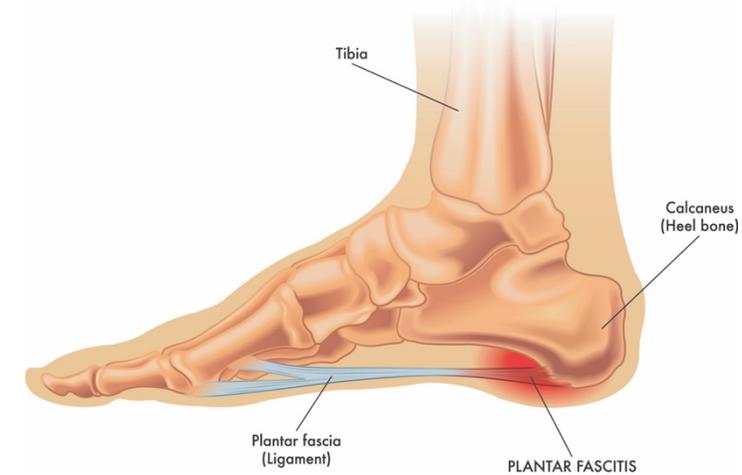
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Professional and caring podiatrists

Plantar Fasciitis



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Treatment Advice



What is plantar fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis is one of the most common type of heel pain. It involves inflammation of the thick band of tissue that runs across the bottom of your foot and connects your heel bone to your toes (plantar fascia).

Symptoms?

The main symptom of plantar fasciitis is pain on the bottom of your foot, around your heel and arch. The pain is usually worse with the first few steps after awakening, although it can also be triggered by long periods of standing or when you get up after sitting. The pain is usually worse after exercise, not during it.

What causes it?

Your plantar fascia is in the shape of a bowstring, supporting the arch of your foot and absorbing the shock while you walk. If tension and stress on this bowstring becomes too great, small tears can occur in the fascia. Repeated stretching and tearing can irritate or inflame the fascia. Even though plantar fasciitis can develop without an obvious cause, some factors can increase your risk of developing this condition. These include:

Age - it is most common between the ages of 40 and 60.

Certain types of exercise - activities that place a lot of stress on your heel and attached tissue, such as long-distance running, ballet dancing and aerobic dance.

Foot mechanics - flat feet, a high arch or even an abnormal pattern of walking can affect the way weight is distributed when you're standing and can put added stress on the plantar fascia.

Obesity - excess pounds put extra stress on your plantar fascia.

Occupations that keep you on your feet - peoples who spend most of their work hours walking or standing on hard surfaces can damage the plantar fascia.

Do

- Rest and raise your foot on a stool.
- Put an ice pack (or frozen peas) in a towel on the painful area for up to 20 mins every 3 or 4 hours.
- Wear wide comfortable shoes with a low-level heel.
- Regular strengthening exercises of your calf and arch, shown by your Podiatrist.
- Exercises that do not put pressure on your feet, such as swimming.
- Take paracetamol or a short course of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID).

Don't

- Do not walk or stand for long hours.
- Do not wear high heel or tight pointy shoes.
- Do not wear flip flops or backless slippers.
- Try not to walk barefoot on hard surfaces.



Your podiatrist can show you a few simple stretches to reduce tension in the foot and calf. Such as, placing a ball (or cold bottle) under the foot and rolling it back and forth.

If treated early (i.e. within 3-4 months of the onset of heel pain), most people recover in several months with conservative treatment, including resting, icing the painful area and stretching.

Treatments

- your podiatrist can prescribe orthotics to support the arch and heel to take the pressure off the plantar fascia.
- physiotherapy can use manual therapy techniques such as joint mobilisations to loosen stiff joints, soft tissue massage or release, muscle flexibility or stretches, foot taping, and strengthening exercises.
- extracorporeal shock wave therapy (ESWT) - a non-invasive treatment that involves passing acoustic shock waves through the affected area.
- as a last resort, consider a referral to an orthopaedic or podiatric surgeon to operate on the plantar fascia