

Custom foot orthotics

Orthotics provide support to the internal structures of the foot which reduces the strain on the plantar fascia. An optimally functional foot orthotic is made from a 3D model of the patient's foot. When made properly the orthotics should be comfortable and beneficial within a few weeks of wear.

Proper fitting and supportive shoes are also important in order to achieve the greatest benefit from the foot orthotic. Your Orthotist/Pedorthist can advise you on shoe selection.

Heel pain by itself can be a symptom of Plantar Fasciitis, but could also indicate other pathologies. It may require further investigation by your Doctor to determine a proper course of treatment.



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PLANTAR FASCIITIS/ HEEL PAIN



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Plantar Fasciitis

SYMPTOMS

Plantar Fasciitis, or heel spur syndrome, is a common condition that affects active people of all ages. The symptoms start with dull intermittent pain in the heel, which usually progresses to a sharp persistent pain. Patients often describe their pain as a “stone bruise” on the heel, or “standing on a piece of glass”. The classic symptom is usually worse in the morning with the first few steps out of bed, or after sitting for prolonged periods.



The plantar fascia acts like a bowstring to maintain the arch of the foot. Overstretching of the plantar fascia causes micro tearing resulting in inflammation and pain. At rest the torn fibers begin to heal with scar tissue which can be re-torn upon weight bearing causing pain.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- Tight calf muscles are thought to be an essential component of plantar fasciitis. Stretching the calf muscles is very important.
- Inappropriate footwear
- Sudden increase in activity level
- Weight gain
- Prolonged standing
- High impact activity

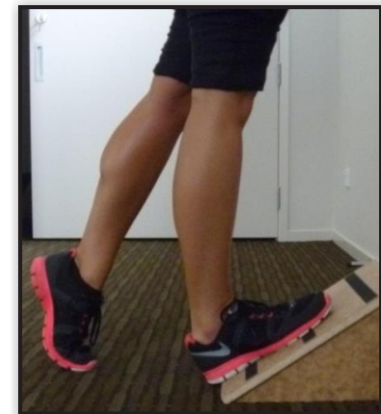
A bone spur in your heel may be present at attachment of the plantar fascia on the calcaneus but is not a cause of the symptoms. It may develop as a result of mechanical problems elsewhere.

TREATMENTS

- Reduce activity level
- Ice/anti-inflammatory medicine
- Calf muscle stretches
- Custom foot orthotics

Stretching

Achilles stretching should be felt in the calf musculature not the foot. Use of a **night splint** puts a prolonged low tension stretch on the plantar fascia allowing it to heal in a weight bearing position and may be indicated for relief of morning pain.



Place ball of foot on an elevated surface (a book or block) with your heel supported by the ground. Move your hips forward, keeping your knee straight, until you feel a stretch in your calf muscle. Hold for 45-60 seconds, repeat 3 times.