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Plantar Fasciitis

Plantar Fasciitis, inflammation of the plantar fascia, is by the far the most common cause of heel pain in adults. It results from the abnormal strain placed on the fascia as a result of abnormal foot function. The plantar fascia is a ligament-like structure that connects the ball of your foot to your heel.

Most often strain of the plantar fascia is caused by excessive arch collapse or twisting of the front part of the foot on the back of the foot. Many patients will complain of intense, sharp burning pain upon taking steps after periods of rest (i.e. after sleep). This is because the fascia contracted while the foot was non-weight bearing and upon those first few steps it tears off the heel. Fortunately, 90% of plantar fasciitis can be cured without surgery.

Treatment Plan

Initial Visit

Your doctor will approach this tackle with a multifaceted approach. There are two goals to treatment: 1. Stop the fascia from being strained and 2. Abolish the pain caused by inflammation. Below is a list of possible treatments.

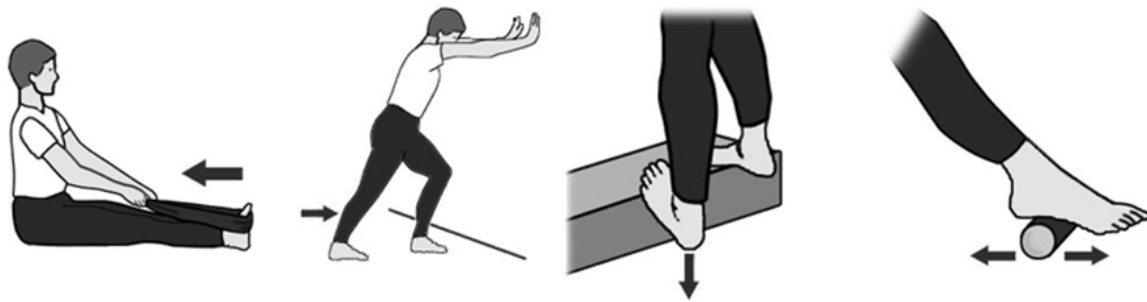
Taping – This is the cornerstone to treatment. The tape will control the way your foot functions so that the plantar fascia isn't strained. Taping can be replaced with removable strap.

Stretching – You will be asked to stretch both your Achilles tendon and the plantar fascia. Stretching of these structures will ultimately reduce the strain.

Night Splints – A night splint is a device worn at night that will keep the fascia stretched to alleviate the first of the morning pain.

Ice Massage - Freeze an ice water bottle and roll your arch across it for 5-10 minutes. The ice will reduce inflammation and the rolling will stretch out the fascia and break up scar tissue.

Anti-inflammatory Medicine – This can either be in a short (6 day) course of a pill or less likely a cortisone injection.



Towel Stretch

Sit on the floor with your legs stretched out in front of you. Loop a towel around the top of the injured foot. Slowly pull the towel towards to keeping your body straight. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds then relax -repeat 10 times. Do this stretch before getting out of bed in the morning.

Calf/Achilles Stretch

Stand facing a wall place your hands on the wall chest high. Move the injured heel back and with the foot flat on the floor. Move the other leg forward and slowly lean toward the wall until you feel a stretch through the calf, hold and repeat.

Stair Stretch

Stand on a step on the balls for your feet, hold the rail or wall for balance. Slow lower the heel of the injured foot to stretch the arch of your foot.

Frozen bottle roll

Roll your bare injured foot back and forth from the tip of the toes to the heel over a frozen plastic bottle. This is a good exercise after activity because not only stretches the plantar fascia but provides cold therapy to the injured area.

Follow-Up Visits

Most often after the first few days, patients will experience 50-75% relief. Subsequent treatments could consist of physical therapy, braces, strengthening exercises or very often orthotics. Orthotics are custom shoe inserts that control the foot function (thereby preventing fascial strain) much like the taping did. Occasionally all our efforts may not work and surgery may need to be considered. We have numerous surgical options that we can offer you that are highly successful, definitive treatments with rapid recovery.

For more information please refer to the following:

www.footphysicians.com

