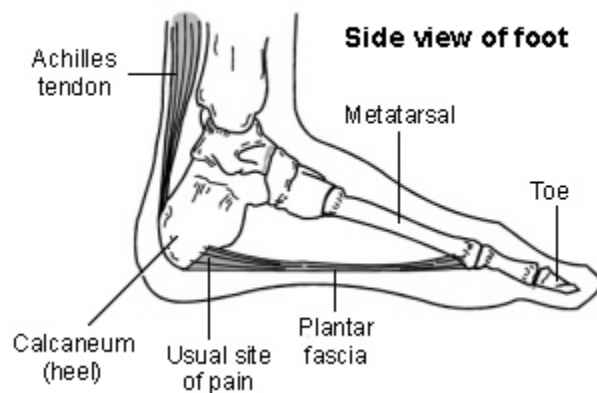


Plantar Fasciitis (Foot Arch and Heel Pain)

What is it?

Plantar fasciitis is one of the most common causes of pain in the bottom of the foot and heel. The plantar fascia is a band of fibrous tissue that runs from the heel to the toes on the bottom of the foot. This tissue can become inflamed by increased weight bearing activity, such as running or excessive walking. Many patients with this condition often complain of increased pain with the first steps in the morning or after prolonged sitting as this tissue becomes tight when not in use and is stressed with the first steps.



Signs and Symptoms of Plantar Fasciitis

- Pain bottom of heel and/or bottom of foot.
- Pain with initial steps after prolonged sitting or in the morning.
- Pain with barefoot walking (especially on hard surfaces).

Possible Causes of Plantar Fasciitis

- Barefoot walking (especially on hard surfaces).
- Tight calf muscles.
- Improper footwear.
- Overtraining.

Prevention of Plantar Fasciitis

- Proper warm up before exercise, sports, or any other strenuous activity.
- Maintaining ideal body weight.

- Wear supportive footwear whenever weight bearing (ie. have supportive shoes placed near bedside to put on before taking initial steps).
- Avoid overtraining.

Prognosis

Plantar fasciitis will typically resolve with conservative management although in some chronic cases may require injections or surgery.

Treatment

- Rest
- Ice massage – freeze styrafoam cups full of water and once frozen tear off top edges of styrafoam to reveal approximately 1 inch of ice. Rub this ice over sole of foot and heel until bottom of foot goes numb (will go through stages of discomfort such as burning, stinging). Foot will typically go numb after 5-10 minutes and treatment is to be stopped at the point when bottom of foot is numb.
- Plantar fascia stretching – can be done by crossing leg and pulling toes upward until stretch is felt on the bottom of the foot. Proper stretching of the plantar fascia can be confirmed by palpating tension on the bottom of the foot with the other hand. Stretch should be held 20-30 seconds and performed 3-5 times (morning and evening).



- Anti-inflammatory meds.
- Calf and Achilles stretching.
- Proper footwear/insoles.
- Slow progression back to previous activity (ie running, sports).