



What is Plantar Fasciitis?

Plantar Fasciitis is the most common cause of heel pain. The Plantar Fascia is the flat band of tissue (ligament) that connects your heel bone to your toes, supporting the foot's arch. Normally the Plantar Fascia acts as a shock absorber. If the tension on this ligament becomes too great, it can cause irritation or inflammation resulting in pain. Plantar Fasciitis is inflammation of the Plantar Fascia with pain generally felt at its attachment at the heel bone. Plantar Fasciitis is common among middle-aged people. It can also affect people who are on their feet a lot.

Symptoms

Symptoms include a sharp pain in the heel, especially the first steps after getting out of bed in the morning or after prolonged sitting. Your foot pain may also increase with prolonged standing, walking or running.

Causes

Plantar Fasciitis is caused by over-stretching the Plantar Fascia. Repeated strain results in tiny tears in the ligament which can lead to inflammation, pain and swelling.

Contributing factors include:

- Over-pronation – your feet roll inward too much
- Having flat feet or higher arches
- Wearing poor fitting or worn out shoes
- Being overweight
- Walking, standing or running for long periods of time, particularly on hard surfaces
- Progressing sporting activity too quickly
- Having tight calf muscles or Achilles tendons



Treatment

Rest: Continued weight-bearing activities can re-aggravate the fascia. Alternative activities such as cycling and swimming can help maintain your fitness as you repair.

Stretch and strengthening exercises: these can help improve foot biomechanics and reduce the aggravating stress on the foot. See exercise section.

Pain & inflammation management: regular massage with an ice water bottle can ease inflammation, as can anti-inflammatory medications. Please consult your GP or pharmacist about the correct medication for you.

Orthotics/arch support: these assist in correcting the poor biomechanics of the foot and absorb shock, which eases stress on the plantar fascia. Our physiotherapists can supply you with an appropriate fitting orthotic.

95% of patients experience substantial relief with arch supports combined with daily strength and stretching exercises.

Use of appropriate, well fitting shoes: consult your physiotherapist for a proper shoe fit. Hastings Sports Injury & Physiotherapy Centre also stock a wide range of thongs and sandals with built in arch support for the summer months and slippers for the winter months.

Plantar Fasciitis Fact Sheet



Hastings Sports Injury &
Physiotherapy Centre

EXCELLENCE DRIVEN. SUPERIOR RESULTS

Exercises

Calf Raises: Holding onto a chair or bench for balance raise up onto your toes steadily over two seconds and then lower over two seconds. Repeat 10 times and perform 1-2 sets per session.



Towel Pick-ups: Sitting on a chair with foot resting on a towel, slowly curl your toes to bunch the towel. Try to lift the towel off the ground with your toes. Repeat 10 times and perform 1-2 sets per session.

Golf Ball Massage: Whilst sitting in a chair roll a golf ball around under the arch of the foot. Continue for up to five minutes.

Alternatively/additionally massage back and forth with a frozen water bottle to assist with pain and inflammation.



Towel Stretch: Place a rolled towel under ball of foot and gently pull back on each end whilst keeping your knee straight. Hold this position for 40+ seconds. Repeat 3-4 times.

Calf Stretch: Stand facing a wall with your hands on wall at about eye level. Adopt a lunge position whilst keeping your back heel on the ground and back knee straight. Bend your front knee until you feel a stretch in your back leg. Hold for 40+ seconds and repeat 3-4 times.



Soleus Stretch: Standing in a lunge position with both knees bent and heels on ground. Keep both feet facing forwards and gently sink down until a stretch is felt in the back lower calf. Hold for 40+ seconds and repeat 3-4 times.

Plantar Fasciitis Fact Sheet



Hastings Sports Injury &
Physiotherapy Centre

EXCELLENCE DRIVEN, SUPERIOR RESULTS

Hamstring Stretch: Lie on your back with a towel around the ball of your foot. Keep your knee straight and put the leg up via the towel until you feel a stretch in the back of your leg. Hold for 40+ seconds and repeat 3-4 times.



Achilles Stretch: Stand on the edge of a step and gently let the heels sink down letting the calf muscle relax. Feel a stretch in your calf and Achilles tendon. Hold for 40+ seconds and repeat 3-4 times.

Note: Exercises should create a pulling feeling, they should not cause pain. It is best to do exercises 2-3 times daily on both legs but you do not need to do them all at once.

**Plantar Fasciitis
Fact Sheet**



**Hastings Sports Injury &
Physiotherapy Centre**
EXCELLENCE DRIVEN, SUPERIOR RESULTS