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The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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Plantar Fasciitis (page 1 of 2)

Plantar Fasciitis is inflammation of the plantar fascia. This is a strong band of tissue that stretches from the heel to the middle bones of the foot. It supports the arch of the foot. Small injuries or stress to the plantar fascia can cause inflammation and degeneration which can cause pain. The injury is usually near to where it attaches to the heel bone.



The main symptom is usually pain on the underside of the heel which may be tender to touch. The pain usually eases on resting the foot, but is often worse when first standing on it, particularly first thing in the morning or after sitting for a long period. Gentle exercises may ease things a little as the day goes by, but a long walk often makes the pain worse.

Who gets it?

Plantar Fasciitis commonly affects people over 40, more frequently women and athletes. The following may cause or aggravate your symptoms;

- suddenly doing lots of walking, running or standing
- wearing shoes with poor cushioning
- sudden gains in weight, or being overweight will put extra strain on the heel
- overuse or sudden stretching of the sole, e.g. athletes who increase their running intensity or distance
- tightness in the Achilles tendon and calf muscle.

How long will it last?

This will depend on the severity and cause of your symptoms. In some cases it may take several months or more to go. Your GP or physiotherapist will be able to offer more advice on this.

What can I do to help myself?

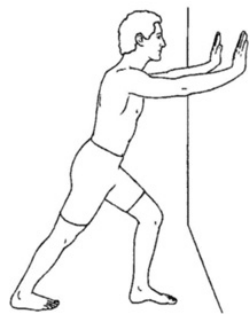
- **Footwear** – Trainers or similar shoes may be more comfortable: these shoes are shock-absorbing and have an arch support. Don't wear old or worn shoes or walk barefoot.

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- **Medication** – If you have been prescribed pain relief take this at regular intervals until the pain settles. Your GP will advise you on this.
- **Heel pads** – you can buy various pads and shoe inserts to help cushion the heel.
- **Ice** – Try applying cold to the area for 8-10 minutes several times a day. Wrap ice in a towel before using
- **Exercises** – The following exercises may help.

Place one hand over your heel bone and one over your toes. Gently pull back your toes until you feel a pull under the foot.

Hold for 20 seconds and repeat 3 times.

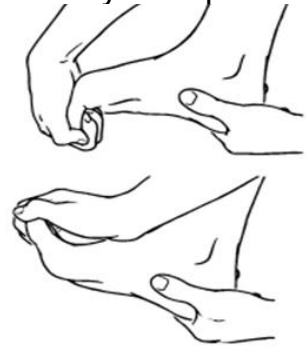


Face the wall and put both hands at shoulder height. Put one foot in front of the other, bend the front knee and keep the back knee straight until you feel a stretch in the back leg.

Hold for 20 seconds and repeat 3 times.

Roll the arch of your foot over a rolling pin, drinks can, or a ball. Repeat 10 times

With foot resting on towel, curl toes under so that you pull the towel towards you. Repeat 10 times.



Other treatments

You may be referred to a physiotherapist or a podiatrist for further treatment which may include:

- taping of the foot with athletic tape
- corrective insoles
- further advice
- steroid injection – this is usually tried only if physiotherapy and self management have failed to help.

For more information

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/heel-pain

www.arthritisresearchuk.org

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