Plantar Fasciitis

Understanding symptoms, treatment and recovery

Plantar Fasciitis

A guide to symptoms, treatment and recovery



Understanding plantar fasciitis

Plantar fasciitis is inflammation of the plantar fascia, a thick band of tissue that runs along the bottom of your foot from your heel to your toes. It commonly causes heel pain, especially with your first steps in the morning or after resting.

Supporting your recovery

Supportive, cushioned footwear, changes to high-impact activity and regular prescribed stretches can help. Heel pads or orthotics may reduce pressure on the heel.

Causes and symptoms

Understanding what may be contributing to your pain

Understanding heel pain

Plantar fasciitis is inflammation of the plantar fascia, a thick band of tissue that runs along the bottom of your foot from your heel to your toes. It commonly causes heel pain, especially with your first steps in the morning or after resting.

Who may be affected?

- People who are overweight
- Runners or those who spend long periods on their feet
- People with high arches or flat feet
- Those wearing unsupportive shoes

Common symptoms

- Sharp heel pain, particularly first thing in the morning
- Pain after long periods of standing or walking
- Tenderness at the bottom of the heel
- Pain after exercise, not usually during activity

Important information

- Pain does not improve after 2-3 weeks of self-care
- Pain affects daily activities or sleep
- You notice numbness, swelling, or bruising

Recovery outlook

Most people improve with conservative care within 3-6 months. Early treatment and consistent exercises improve recovery time.

Footwear and activity reminder

Supportive, cushioned footwear, changes to high-impact activity and regular prescribed stretches can help. Heel pads or orthotics may reduce pressure on the heel.

Exercises and rehabilitation

Gentle movements under professional guidance

Exercise examples

Ask your physiotherapist which exercises are suitable for you. Use controlled movements and work within comfort.



Exercise instructions

1. Calf Stretch: Lean against a wall, one leg back, heel on floor, hold 30 seconds, repeat 3 times each leg.
2. Plantar Fascia Stretch: Sit, cross affected leg over other, pull toes back towards shin, hold 15-30 seconds, repeat 3 times.
3. Towel Scrunches / Marble Pick-ups: Strengthen foot muscles.

Recovery guidance

Most people improve with conservative care within 3-6 months. Early treatment and consistent exercises improve recovery time.

Management and next steps

Self-care, treatment and when to seek help

Self-care and home management

- Rest and activity modification - reduce high-impact activities
- Ice therapy - apply ice to the heel 10-15 minutes, 2-3 times a day
- Stretching exercises - calf stretches and plantar fascia stretches daily
- Footwear - wear supportive shoes with cushioning and avoid walking barefoot on hard floors
- Heel pads or orthotics - may help reduce pressure on the heel

Treatment physiotherapists may offer

- Hands-on techniques (massage, stretching)
- Taping or orthotics to support the arch
- Exercise program for stretching and strengthening
- Advice on footwear and activity modification

Questions or concerns?

- Pain does not improve after 2-3 weeks of self-care
- Pain affects daily activities or sleep
- You notice numbness, swelling, or bruising

References

- NHS - Plantar Fasciitis: www.nhs.uk/conditions/plantar-fasciitis
- Chartered Society of Physiotherapy - Foot Pain Guidance

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