

Plantar Fasciitis

Plantar Fasciitis is a painful condition that is caused by placing excessive strain through the plantar fascia (a thick band of connective tissue that runs through the arch of the foot). This strain normally occurs in the middle of the arch or at its attachment site in the heel. Some common causes include:

- Acute injury
- Poor foot biomechanics and the foot rolling inwards
- Poor footwear
- Higher than average body weight



Common treatment options include:

Rest and reduced activity – As Plantar Fasciitis is considered an overuse condition it is recommended to undertake low levels of activity and rest as much as possible in order to allow the tissue to strengthen again.

Ice – By rolling a frozen 600ml disposable water bottle or tennis ball under the arch, this provides relief to the tissue by decreasing any inflammation and acting to massage the tissue also stimulating the healing process.

Low dye taping – This is a taping technique that allows the arch to be supported when walking and is a good indicator that orthotics may be beneficial.

Orthotics – Orthotics improve foot biomechanics and movement during walking/running acting to limit the foot's ability to over stretch through the arch.

Footwear – Try and wear good supportive runners as much as you can as this will give your foot the most amount of shock absorption and support a shoe can provide. Avoid thongs or sandals and going barefoot.

Stretches

1. Plantar Fascia stretch

Cross the affected leg over the other leg while seated, so your affected foot is resting on your other leg while seated, so your other knee. Pull the toes upward toward the shin until a stretch was felt in the sole of the foot. Tension in the plantar fascia (arch) is massaged while performing the stretch.



Hold the stretch for ten seconds, prior to any weight-bearing.

2. Wall calf stretch

Stand about two feet away from a wall. Place the ball of your right foot against the wall while your heel remains on the ground. Slowly and gently lean into the wall while keeping your knee straight.



Hold this for 30 to 60 seconds.

3. Calf stretch

a) Straight leg

Stand about three feet from a wall and put your right foot behind you ensuring your toes are facing forward. Keep your heel on the ground and lean forward with your right knee straight.

Hold this for 30 to 60 seconds.



b) Bent knee

Stand away from a wall and put your right foot behind you and be sure your toes are facing forward. Lean forward at the ankle while bending the right knee and keeping your heel on the ground.

Hold this for 30 to 60 seconds.



Strengthening

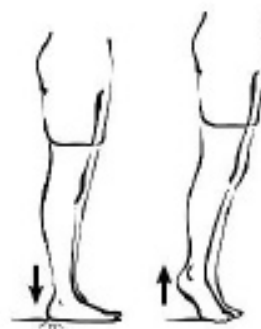
Heel raises

Standard heel raises

Stand tall, holding the back of a supportive kitchen chair or bench, lift your heels off the floor and place your body weight onto your toes and forefoot.

Hold for 3 seconds, then slowly lower your heels. Repeat 10 times.

When comfortable, try completing heel raises without steadying yourself with your hands and keeping the same controlled movements.



More challenging

1. Single leg heel raises with hands to stabilise
2. Single leg heel raises without hands to stabilise
3. Heel raises on a step

