

PLANTAR FASCIITIS



Plantar fasciitis, sometimes called a heel spur, is a condition that causes pain on the bottom of the heel when putting weight on the foot. There can be many underlying causes of heel pain, and several options are available for treatment. The plantar fascia is a band of tissue, similar to a tendon, which runs from the front of the heel bone (calcaneus) to the ball of the foot. This dense strip of tissue helps to support the arch of the foot.

When the foot is on the ground the full weight of the body is concentrated on the plantar fascia. This force stretches the tissue as the arch of the foot tries to flatten from the weight of the body. This leads to stress on the plantar fascia where it attaches to the heel bone. Small tears of the fascia can happen. However, the body normally repairs these tears.

Treatment at the acute phase includes: Protection, Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation. Along with the above a non steroidal anti-inflammatory medication may be prescribed to aid in the reduction of swelling and pain. Stretching is a key component to restoring the appropriate function to the plantar fascia during the Rehabilitation phase.

The goal of rehabilitation is to return you to your sport or activity as soon as is safely possible. If you return too soon you may worsen your injury, which could lead to permanent damage. Everyone recovers from injury at a different rate. Some patients may continue to have pain and discomfort and will go on to require more invasive treatments. Several exciting new treatments are available in the treatment of recalcitrant plantar-fasciitis before surgery is considered. More on those treatments in the follow up article in next month's issue.

▶ **GET TO KNOW THE WRITER...**

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