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## Plantar Fasciitis (Heel Pain)

### What is Plantar Fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis is an inflammation of the band of tissue (the plantar fascia) that extends from the heel to the toes. In this condition, the fascia first becomes irritated and then inflamed—resulting in heel and arch pain.

### Symptoms of Plantar Fasciitis

- Pain in the bottom of your foot, especially at the front or centre of the heel bone
- Pain that is worse when first rising in the morning
- Pain when first standing up after any long period of sitting, or after increased levels of activity especially in non-supportive shoes
- For some people the pain subsides but returns after spending long periods of time on their feet.

### Causes of Plantar Fasciitis

- Excessive weight load on the foot due to obesity or prolonged standing
- Mechanical imbalances of the foot
- Osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis
- Sudden increase in body weight (e.g., pregnancy)
- Sudden increase in walking or running
- Tight calf muscles is a very common cause of the disorder
- Wearing shoes with poor support, including flip-flops

## Treatment Options Include:

- **RICE-M.** (Resting, Icing, Compression, Elevation & Massaging)
- **Padding and strapping.** Placing pads in the shoe softens the impact of walking. Strapping helps support the foot and reduce strain on the fascia.
- **Orthotic devices.** Orthotics fit into your shoe help correct the underlying structural abnormalities causing the plantar fasciitis.
- **Injection therapy.** In some cases, corticosteroid injections are used to help reduce the inflammation and relieve pain.
- **Removable walking cast.** A removable walking cast may be used to keep your foot immobile for a few weeks to allow it to rest and heal.
- **Night splint.** Wearing a night splint allows you to maintain an extended stretch of the plantar fascia while sleeping. This may help reduce the morning pain experienced by some patients.
- **Stretching and strengthening.** These measures may be used to help provide relief.

## Long-Term Care

No matter what kind of treatment you undergo for plantar fasciitis, the underlying causes that led to this condition may remain. Therefore, you will need to continue with preventive measures. If you are overweight, it is important to reach and maintain an ideal weight. For all patients, wearing supportive shoes and using custom orthotic devices are the mainstay of long-term treatment for plantar fasciitis.

## Practitioner's Notes:

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