

Patient Information Leaflet

Heel Pain

What is it ?

When your first few steps out of bed in the morning or rising from a chair cause severe pain in the heel of your foot, you most probably have PLANTAR FASCIITIS. It is an overuse injury affecting the sole or plantar surface of the foot.

A diagnosis of Plantar fasciitis means that you have inflamed the tough fibrous fascia connecting your heel bone to the base of your toes. You are more likely to get this condition if you are overweight, or if you have a job that requires a lot of walking or standing on hard surfaces. You are also at risk if you walk or run a lot, especially if you have tight calf muscles that limit how far you can flex your ankles upwards. People with very flat feet or very high arches are also more prone to this condition.

What can I do?

- ✓ Reduce weight if overweight.
- ✓ Simple painkillers such as Paracetamol and/or anti-inflammatory medicines may help to reduce the pain.
- ✓ Heel cups to wear in your shoes to act as shock absorbers as you walk.
- ✓ Stretching exercises.

What exercises to do?

1. Before getting out of bed or chair; Do 10 stretches to each leg by pulling your toes up and holding for 20 seconds.

2. Calf stretch

Hold that position for a count of 10. Relax and repeat 10 times on each leg.

3. Calf raise

Hold, count to 10, and repeat 10 to 15 times.

The above exercises should be continued for a minimum of three months. In some cases, a referral to a Podiatrist is appropriate and in very rare cases, surgery is necessary as a “last resort”.