

Plantar Fasciitis

The most common cause of heel pain in adults.

The plantar fascia is a thick ligament that connects your heel to the front of your foot. It acts as a "shock absorber" and supports the arch of your foot. The plantar fascia ligaments experience a lot of wear and tear, and as a result, damage or tearing of the ligaments is quite common.

Plantar fasciitis is when this fascia becomes inflamed, resulting in heel pain and stiffness.

What are the main symptoms?

Pain in the bottom of your heel (specific pinpoint areas are common)

Pain in heel usually getting worse in the morning.



How can it be treated?

Stretching exercises

Avoid going barefoot

Insoles in your shoes

Padding, taping and strapping

Steroid injection

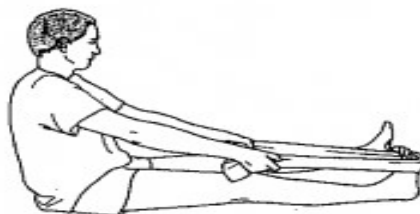
If you feel like you are suffering with plantar fasciitis, contact your local podiatrist for an assessment and treatment plan specific to your needs

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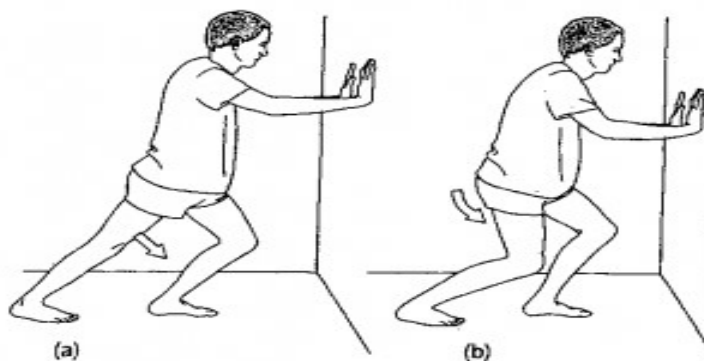
1. Achilles tendon and plantar fascia stretch

First thing in the morning, loop a towel, a piece of elastic or a tubigrip around the ball of your foot and, keeping your knee straight, pull your toes towards your nose, holding for 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times for each foot.



2. Wall push-ups or stretches for Achilles tendon

The Achilles tendon comes from the muscles at the back of your thigh and your calf muscles. These exercises need to be performed first with the knee **straight** and then with the knee **bent** in order to stretch both parts of the Achilles tendon. Twice a day do the following wall push-ups or stretches: (a) Face the wall, put both hands on the wall at shoulder height, and stagger the feet (one foot in front of the other). The front foot should be approximately 30 cm (12 inches) from the wall. With the front knee bent and the back knee straight, lean into the stretch (i.e. towards the wall) until a tightening is felt in the calf of the back leg, and then ease off. Repeat 10 times. (b) Now repeat this exercise but bring the back foot forward a little so that the back knee is slightly bent. Repeat the push-ups 10 times.



3. Stair stretches for Achilles tendon and plantar fascia

Holding the stair-rail for support, with legs slightly apart, position the feet so that both heels are off the end of the step. Lower the heels, keeping the knees straight, until a tightening is felt in the calf. Hold this position for 20–60 seconds and then raise the heels back to neutral. Repeat 6 times, at least twice a day.



4. Dynamic stretches for plantar fascia

This involves rolling the arch of the foot over a rolling pin, a drinks can or a tennis ball etc, while either standing (holding the back of a chair for support) or sitting. Allow the foot and ankle to move in all directions over the object. This can be done for a few minutes until there is some discomfort. Repeat this exercise at least twice a day. The discomfort can be relieved by rolling the foot on a cool drinks can from the fridge.

