

Plantar Fasciitis

What is plantar fasciitis (heel pain)?

The plantar fascia is a ligament (band) that runs from the ball of your foot to your heel. Certain things can cause the plantar fascia to become stressed or strained. This causes plantar fasciitis. Plantar fasciitis can cause a lot of pain in the bottom of your foot.

What causes plantar fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis is a sign that the plantar fascia ligament (band) is stressed. The band may get stressed from:

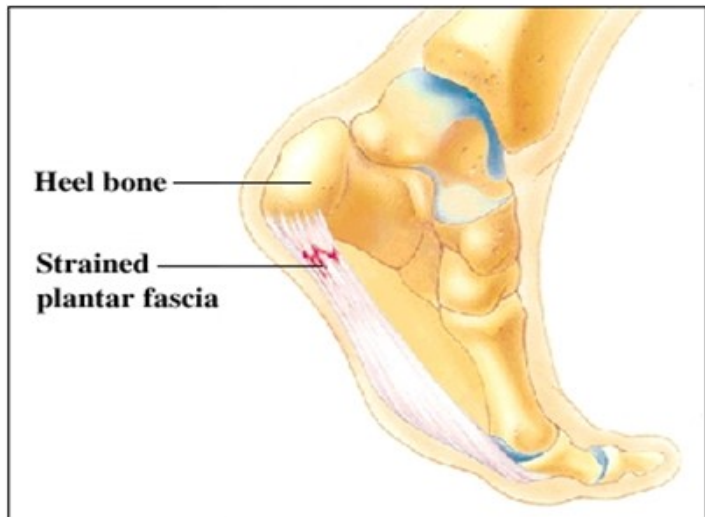
- Tight muscles in your calf (lower leg)
- Wearing shoes that don't support your foot well
- Foot injury or trauma
- Flat or falling foot arch
- Some types of exercise
- Bone problems
- Some muscles in the foot being stronger than others

What can I do to prevent or help plantar fasciitis?

Wear shoes with a firm sole that bends at the ball of your foot.



Don't wear shoes that bend in the arch.



What are the signs of plantar fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis can cause a lot of foot pain. You may notice that you have foot pain:

- When you stand up after sleeping, laying down, or sitting for more than 30 minutes
- While you are driving
- After you walk, work out, or are active

- Do stretching exercises. Turn the page to learn more about stretching exercises.
- Wear supportive and comfortable shoes. Your shoes should have a firm sole that bends at the ball of your foot and a firm support at the heel.
- Add an arch support. Avoid supports that are soft and cushioned. Use arch supports that are firm instead. Keep in mind that even the best arch support won't make up for a bad shoe.

Stretching Exercises

Stretching can be very helpful for heel pain. Do any of these stretches 3 to 4 times a day.

The Hamstring Stretch



1. Put the leg of the foot that is hurting straight in front of you.
2. Bend the knee of your other leg, or you could drop it off the side of the bed.
3. Loop a belt, scarf, or band across the bottom of your foot that is hurting. Keep your knee locked.
4. Hold the ends of the belt, scarf, or band in your hands. Keep all of the muscles in your legs relaxed.
5. Pull on both ends of the belt, scarf, or band to stretch the muscles in the back of your legs.

The Wall Push Up



1. Face a wall. Put the foot that hurts half on the floor and half on the wall with your heel firmly on the ground.
2. Keep your other foot behind you, about 2 feet from the wall.
3. Keep both of your legs straight.
4. Lean into the wall with your hips until you feel a light stretch in your foot and your calf muscle (lower leg).
5. Hold this for 20 to 30 seconds, then relax. Do not bounce.

The Ice Bottle Stretch



1. Fill up a small water bottle. Put it in the freezer for a few hours.
2. At night, take out the bottle. Place it on a towel and put it on the floor.
3. Push down a little bit and roll your foot from heel to toe, then toe to heel over the bottle. Do this for 5 to 10 minutes.

It is important to stretch after you exercise. When you exercise, your muscles become stronger and tighter. Stretching after you exercise lets those muscles relax. Stretch for 5 to 10 minutes after you exercise or wear high heels to help prevent heel pain.