

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Foreword | 2 |
| What is Plantar Fasciitis? | 4 |
| Symptoms of Plantar Fasciitis | 6 |
| Causes & Risk Factors of Plantar Fasciitis | 8 |
| Natural Treatments for Plantar Fasciitis | 13 |
| Stretches for Plantar Fasciitis | 16 |
| Orthotic Treatment Options | 21 |
| Medical Treatment Options | 24 |
| Conclusion | 28 |

Foreword

Before starting Heel That Pain in 2001, we saw patient after patient with chronic, debilitating heel pain.

The options for treatment were limited to invasive, extreme procedures that weren't even particularly effective. And the literature on plantar fasciitis was sparse at best.

Patients needed a drastically new approach to healing.

So we set to work.

Over the course of several years, our podiatrists worked side by side with patients to understand their pain and find a solution that was affordable, available, and simple. It was through this process that Fascia Bar technology was born, and through which we learned that most cases of plantar fasciitis could be treated without medical intervention--with easy lifestyle changes and this revolutionary new type of heel and foot support.

There's nothing we love more than reading reviews of Heel That Pain's products. The concern we felt in the early days as we saw patients suffer from untreated chronic heel pain has been replaced with immense satisfaction as we see the Heel That Pain approach changing lives for the better.

If you're reading this guide, you or someone you love is dealing with heel or foot pain. This guide includes:

Information about plantar fasciitis, including symptoms and causes

Natural treatment options for heel and foot pain

Information about medical treatment options

Here's to healing.

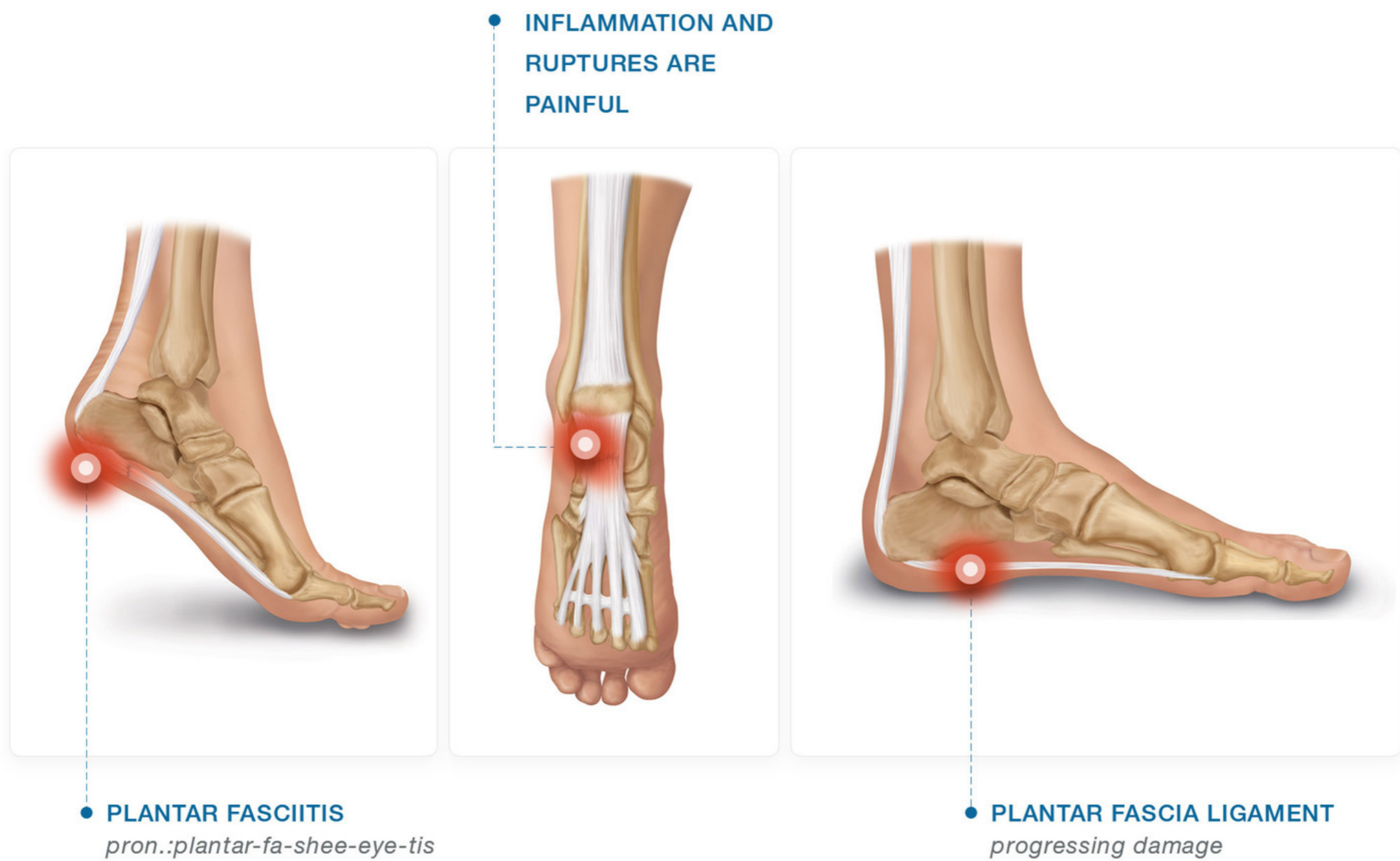
- Heel That Pain

What Is Plantar Fasciitis?

If the first steps you take each morning cause sharp, throbbing heel pain, or if you experience ongoing heel pain as you move throughout the day, you may be suffering from Plantar Fasciitis.

The brunt of every step you take is borne by the bones, muscles and ligaments of your feet. Healthy feet have strong, wonderfully flexible ligaments, which are designed to support standing, walking and running. When damage is sustained to one of the most important ligaments in your feet--the plantar fascia--a condition known as Plantar Fasciitis develops.

The plantar fascia ligament is located along the sole of your foot. It is made up of fibrous tissue that stretches outward from the heel bone, like a strong piece of elastic, and then branches out across the arch and through the ball area of the foot toward the toes.

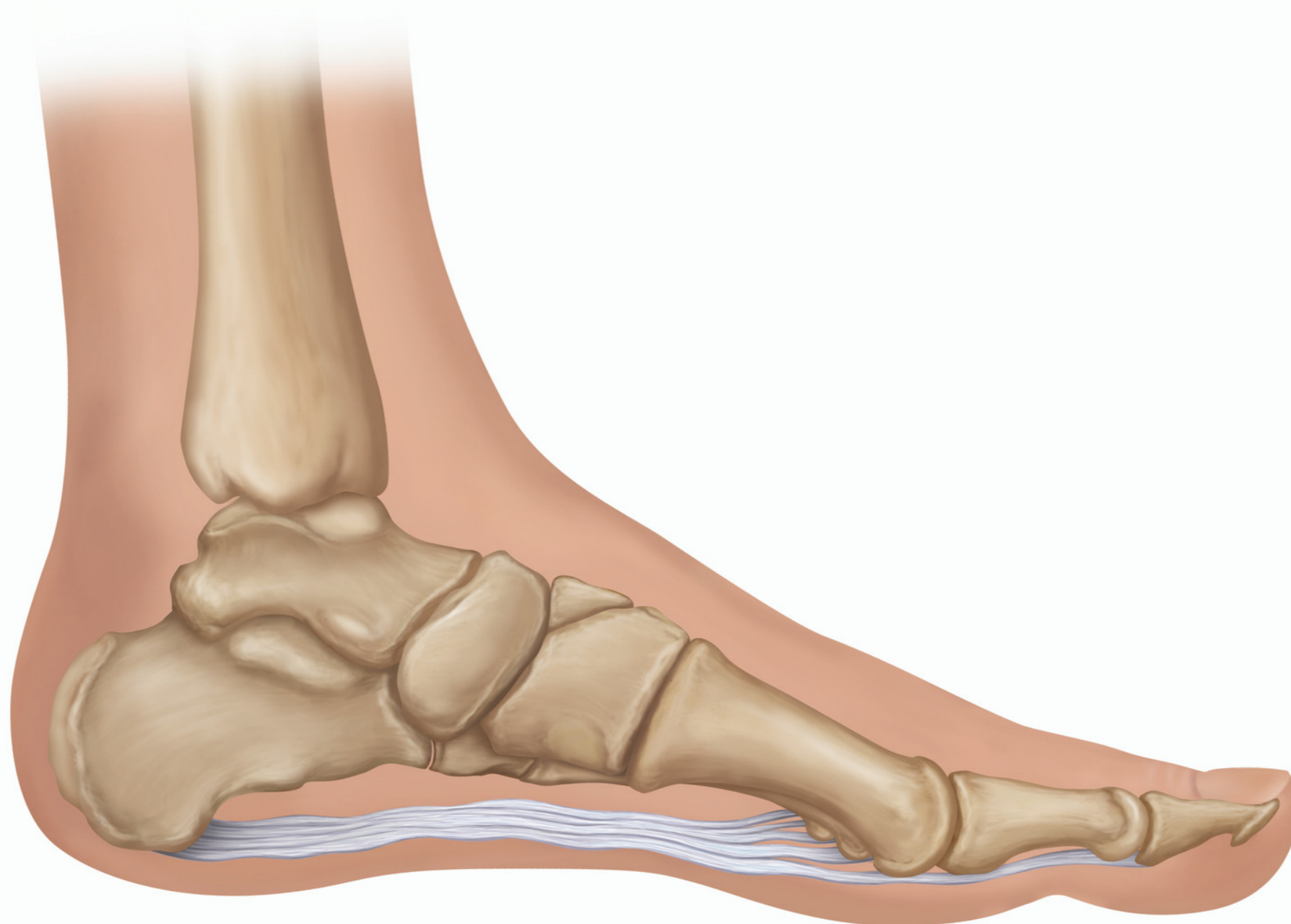


This ligament is meant to support the bounce and spring of normal daily activity, but in the case of Plantar Fasciitis, the plantar fascia stretches and moves more than it should, resulting in small tears in the tissue. These tears create inflammation.

Additionally, calcium deposits, called bone spurs, may form on the heel bone. These bony protrusions are then pressed into the fatty pad of your heel with each step you take, causing further pain.

It's important to understand that Plantar Fasciitis is a progressive condition. If left untreated, the combination of small tears, inflammation and possible bone spurs can become debilitating. Fortunately, there are excellent, natural options for resolving the pain of this ailment.

This eBook will help you to understand the symptoms, causes, and treatments of this condition to give you rapid relief from your pain--without spending hundreds or even thousands of dollars on medical interventions.



Symptoms of Plantar Fasciitis

Plantar Fasciitis encompasses a broad range of symptoms localized in the foot and heel area. One of the most common hallmarks of this condition is an aching, burning pain in the heel that's often worse in the morning and improves slightly as the fascia are stretched throughout the day.

Additional signs and symptoms of Plantar Fasciitis include the following:



Dull, aching, sharp or burning pain in the sole of your foot, often center in the heel area.



Sudden heel pain or pain that builds gradually.



Foot pain that has lasted for more than a few years, or which you experience periodically over the course of months or years.



Pain in just one foot, though it is possible to have Plantar Fasciitis affect both feet.



Swelling, redness, or feeling of heat in the heel area and arch of the feet.



Limping.



Stiffness in the heel and aching arches.



Symptoms improve somewhat with rest, stretching the fascias, and icing.



Foot or heel pain that worsens after long periods of standing.



Foot or heel pain that onsets in conjunction with rapid weight gain.



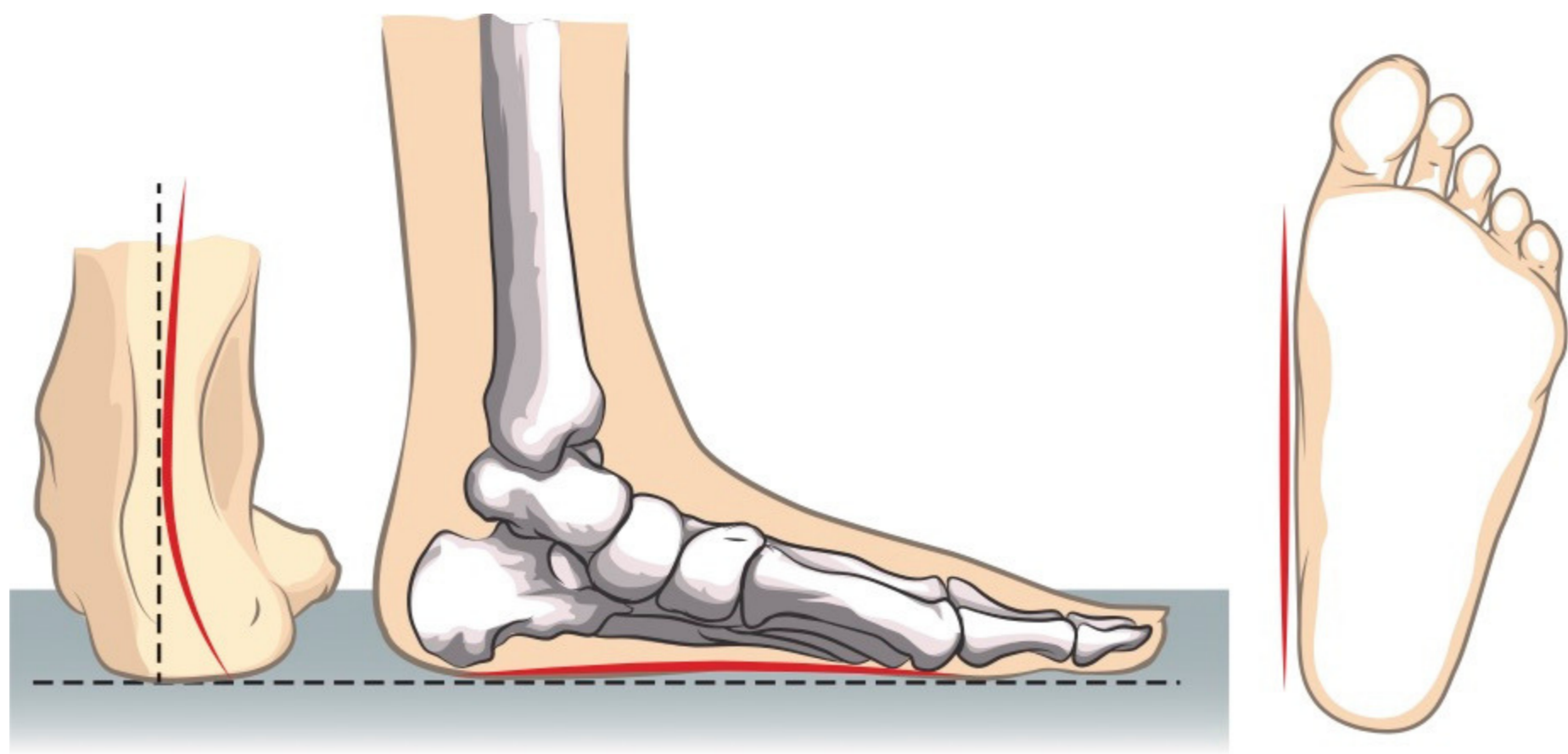
Foot or heel pain that flares up after a period of prolonged activity on your feet.

The pain from Plantar Fasciitis can be severe and debilitating. Thankfully, there's hope in the form of simple, affordable, and effective treatments.

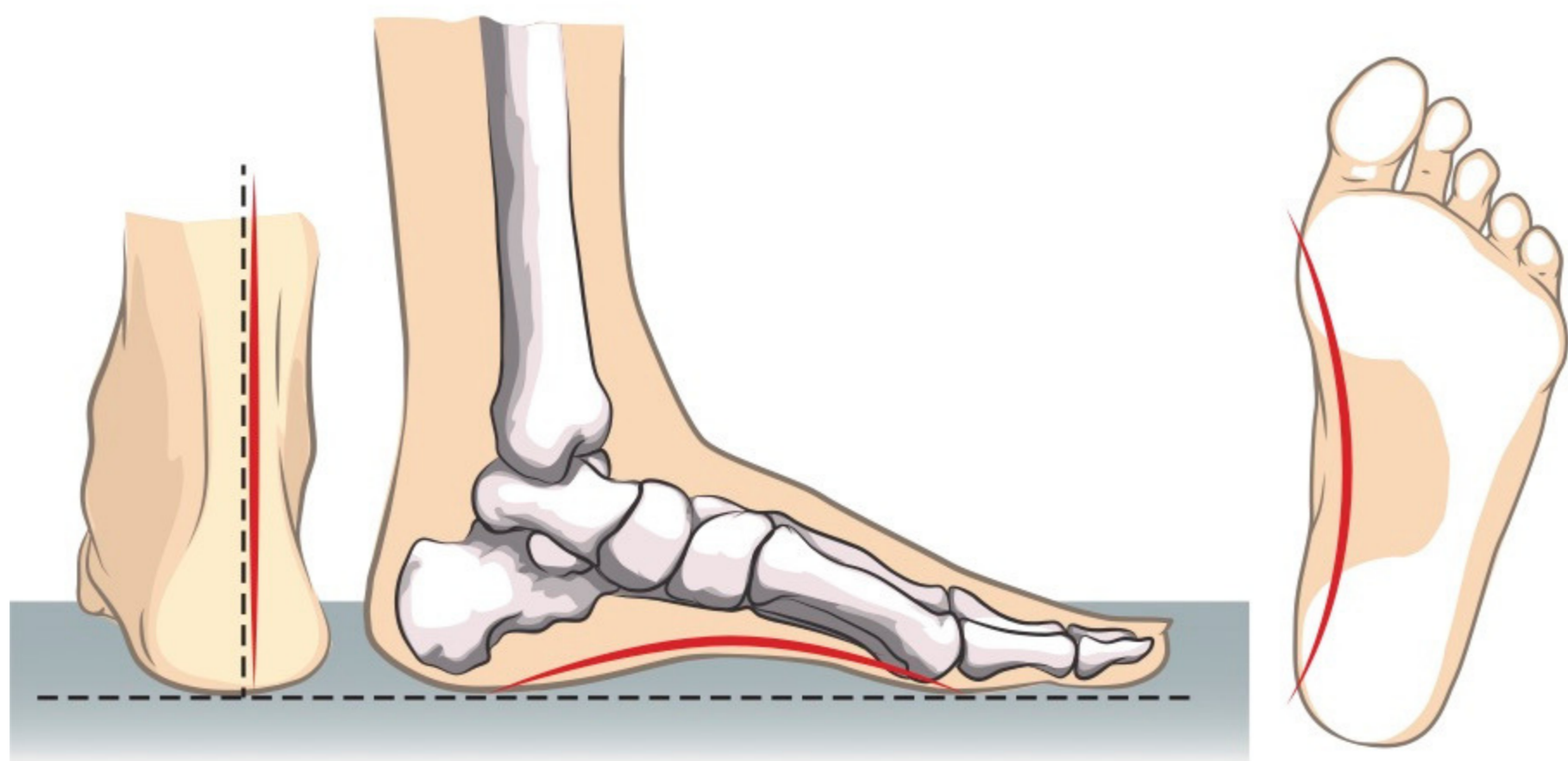
Causes and Risk Factors of Plantar Fasciitis

If you're suffering from Plantar Fasciitis, you're not alone. Plantar Fasciitis is widely considered to be the number one cause of heel pain. The condition affects young and old alike, in both highly active and sedentary individuals. The following are the most common causes and risk factors of Plantar Fasciitis.

Flat Feet, or Pronation: Pronation, commonly referred to as “flat feet,” is a condition that occurs when the arch of the foot collapses, which forces the foot to turn outwards at the ankle. When this happens, more impact naturally falls on the inner sides of your feet, meaning the plantar fascia can't transfer weight evenly from the heel to the ball of the foot when you walk. Often, pronation occurs as a result of strain on the foot, due to weight gain or long periods of standing without rest. Elderly people are particularly prone to pronation, because of weakened muscles and tissues in the foot, causing the arch to collapse. Women may be prone to developing this condition if they wear high heels for long periods of time.



Flat feet



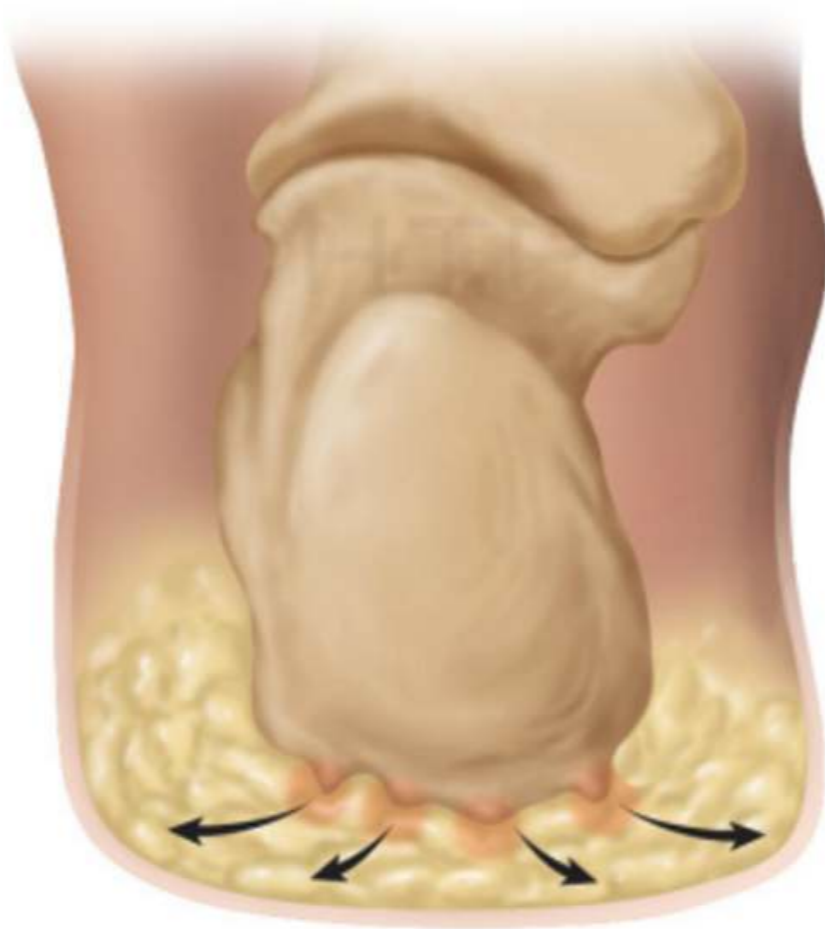
Normal feet

High Arches: High arches can be just as problematic as flat feet! Also known as a “cavus foot,” high arches are more common in children, but may appear in adults as well. Because not as much of the foot touches the ground when walking or during physical activity, people with high arches don’t absorb shock as well. This increased impact to the plantar fascia can result in damage and inflammation that leads to Plantar Fasciitis.

Rapid Weight Gain or Obesity: Chronic weight problems or rapid weight gain (e.g., from pregnancy) is one of the biggest red flags for developing Plantar Fasciitis. Carrying extra weight puts a lot of strain on your heels, the ball of your foot, and your plantar fascia ligament, which in turn puts strain on your arches and can lead to inflammation, pain, and ultimately plantar fasciitis. One study reported that an alarming 90 percent of individuals with heel pain are overweight. The amount of strain to the fascia from even simple activities like walking around the grocery store can put excessive stress to the plantar fascia for someone who is very overweight.

The Normal Aging Process: Simply aging can put a person at additional risk for Plantar Fasciitis! As we age, the soft tissues in our feet become less elastic, less able to absorb shock.

Overuse of the Feet: The muscles and tendons of the foot are amazingly resilient, but they need rest to function properly and avoid injury. “Pushing through the pain,” not allowing sufficient time to rest and heal between exercise sessions or physical activity, skipping a warmup or stretches, or suddenly increasing the intensity or duration of a workout without properly preparing can lead to injury and inflammation of the arches, and eventually Plantar Fasciitis.



Long Periods of Standing: Long periods of standing without proper rest breaks or supportive shoes can be a significant risk factor for Plantar Fasciitis. The long periods of weight and impact your feet experience while standing strains and flattens the arch, leading to inflammation and increased risk of injury.

Improper Footwear: Not wearing shoes that support your arch and heel is one of the most critical warning signs of impending Plantar Fasciitis. You should steer clear of shoes that are the wrong size, don't cushion your heel with a thick sole, or allow your heel to wiggle around—and not just when you exercise. Many people make the mistake of wearing high heels or flip flops that strain their arch during the day, and then switch to more supportive shoes to exercise. Any shoes you wear—or don't wear—throughout the day have an impact on the health of your feet. Spending a lot of time going barefoot can also be a risk factor of Plantar Fasciitis, because of the lack of support and greater impact to the foot when walking.

Trauma to the Foot: Taking a fall or experiencing other trauma to the foot such as a car accident can put person at risk for Plantar Fasciitis if the injury is not allowed to heal properly before resuming some types of physical activity.

Even injuries that aren't sustained directly to the feet can be a risk factor, since the alignment of the hips, back, and legs all impact a person's gait and posture. Changes to the gait in response to pain or injury can mean increased impact to the fascia, which can in turn lead to inflammation and small tears in the fascia.

Natural Treatments for Plantar Fasciitis

Not so sure about the efficacy of home remedies?

What if a change of mind could heal your heel pain?

Podiatrists state that more than 90% of cases of Plantar Fasciitis and heel pain can be treated without drugs or surgery.

If you're dealing with chronic heel pain and haven't found relief from trips to the doctor's office, we'd like to invite you to try some non-invasive, natural home remedies that will relieve your symptoms and help your body heal.

We'll break these treatments into three simple categories that you can explore for quick-acting, permanent--and natural--relief from your heel pain.

RICE

The RICE method is a go-to treatment for many different types of injury, and it works well for plantar fasciitis. It's also an easy-to-remember acronym:



R: Resting is incredibly important for healing plantar fasciitis. This might seem like a no-brainer, but it's often the first thing we neglect in our busy lives! Kick back with your feet elevated for twenty minutes, twice a day. Watch TV, read a book--whatever you prefer! The important thing is to be totally relaxed and give your feet a break.

I: Icing will drastically help reduce inflammation of the plantar fascia ligament. Ice twice a day for 15-20 minutes, and immediately after any type of exercise. Use [Ice Therapy Slippers](#), an ice pack, or simply wrap ice cubes up in a towel to quickly reduce inflammation and numb sore heels and feet.

C: Compression can help reduce the amount of swelling from inflamed feet and heels and limit the movement of the fascia during physical activity. Use simple taping techniques to restrict movement and avoid further injury.

E: Elevation is just as important as rest! Rest with your feet raised above heart level to improve circulation and facilitate faster healing.

Begin using RICE as soon as you notice heel pain, and keep in mind that the RICE method is most effective for plantar fasciitis when combined with stretching and the use of orthotics.

Stretches for Plantar Fasciitis

Stretching is one of the most effective ways you can heal plantar fasciitis. The condition is often exacerbated by tight muscles of the calves and feet, so stretching helps to relieve tension on the ligament. The exercises you see below can be done any time of day, however it's recommended to do them first thing in the morning. Repeat throughout the day as needed! Remember, stretching is most effective when performed regularly in combination with RICE and the use of orthotics.

Belt Stretch:

The Belt Stretch is a simple, effective way to reduce tightness and improve flexibility and strength in your arch. You'll want to perform this exercise twice a day for a week to begin seeing results.

- Take a wide belt and hold one end in each hand.
- Place the center of the belt over the ball of your foot.
- Then, with your knee straight, pull your ankle back toward you using the belt and the muscle on the front of your leg. Think of it as reverse stretching your arch.
- Pull back and hold for ten seconds. Then relax and repeat for five to ten minutes.



Plantar Stretch:

The Plantar Stretch is a great way to lengthen the plantar fascia ligament and prevent morning heel pain. This stretch is designed to treat and prevent heel pain and plantar fasciitis; if done in the morning before getting out of bed, it can alleviate the sharp pain you may experience with your first few steps of the day.

- Start with both feet in front of you and bend one leg at the knee
- Grab the ball of the opposite foot with one hand over the toes and pull towards your chest
- Gently pull on the ball of the foot (not the just the toes) to create a good stretch along the arch of the foot for a count of 10.
- Hold this stretch on each foot for 15-20 seconds and repeat on both sides 3 times, once a day. You should see improvement within one week of consistent stretching!

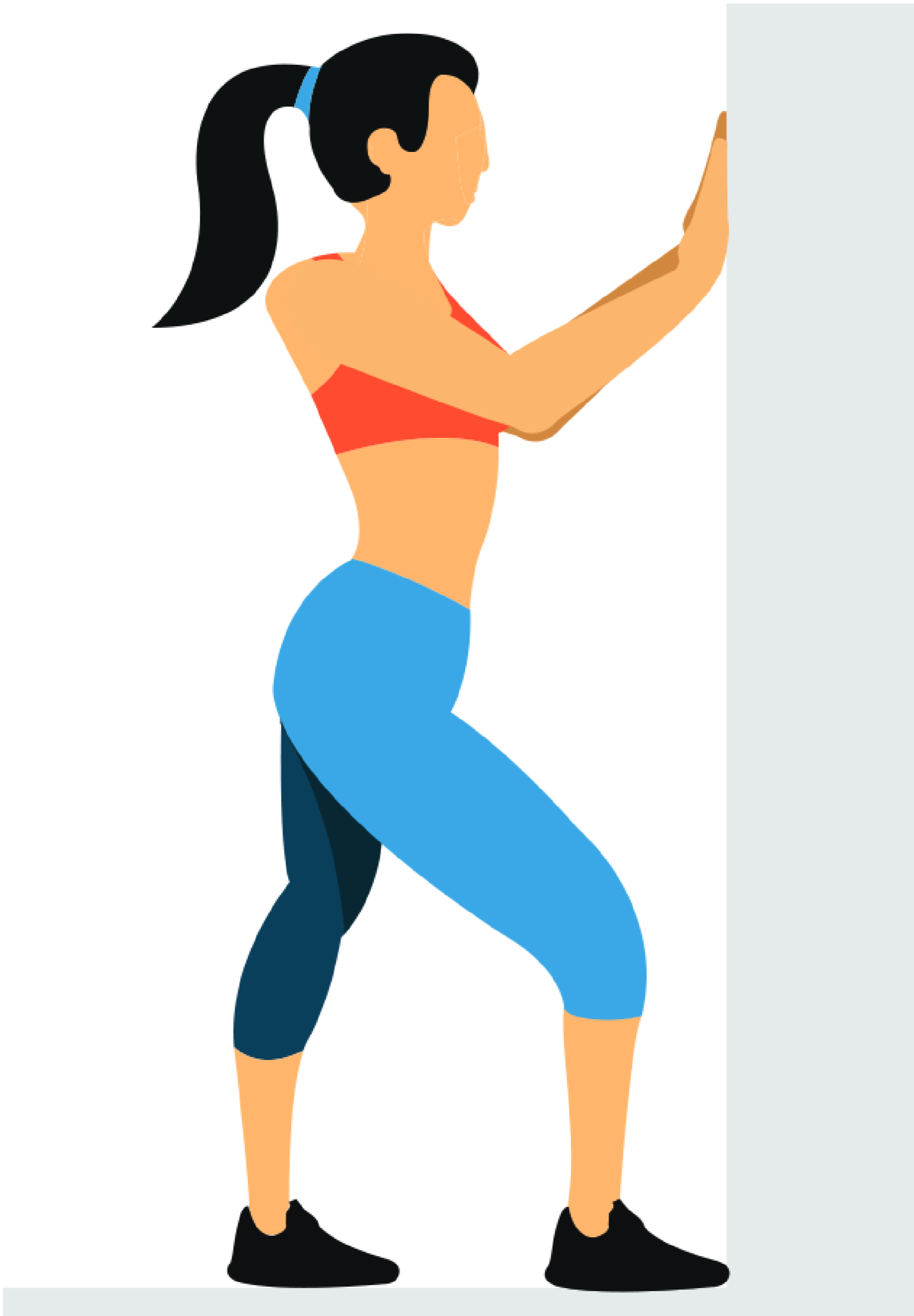


Wall Stretch:

The Wall Stretch can be done just about anywhere! It will help relieve pain caused by plantar fasciitis, heel spurs, and achilles tendonitis. For best results, perform this stretch at least once a day.

- For this exercise you will start with both feet together, placing both hands on the wall in front of you for support.
- With one leg, take a large step forward with your toes 2-3 inches away from the wall. Shift your weight onto the front leg and bend at the knee, keeping the back leg straight and both heels on the ground. Using the wall for support, lean forward into the wall and feel the stretch along the back of your leg and calf.
- Return to a neutral position and repeat on the other side. Be sure to keep the back leg straight and the front knee in a bend. Holding this stretch on each side for 20-30 seconds and repeating 3 times on each leg will loosen tight calves, which are a major contributing factor to heel pain and plantar fasciitis.

Wall Stretch



[Click Here for More Stretches](#)

Orthotic Treatment Options

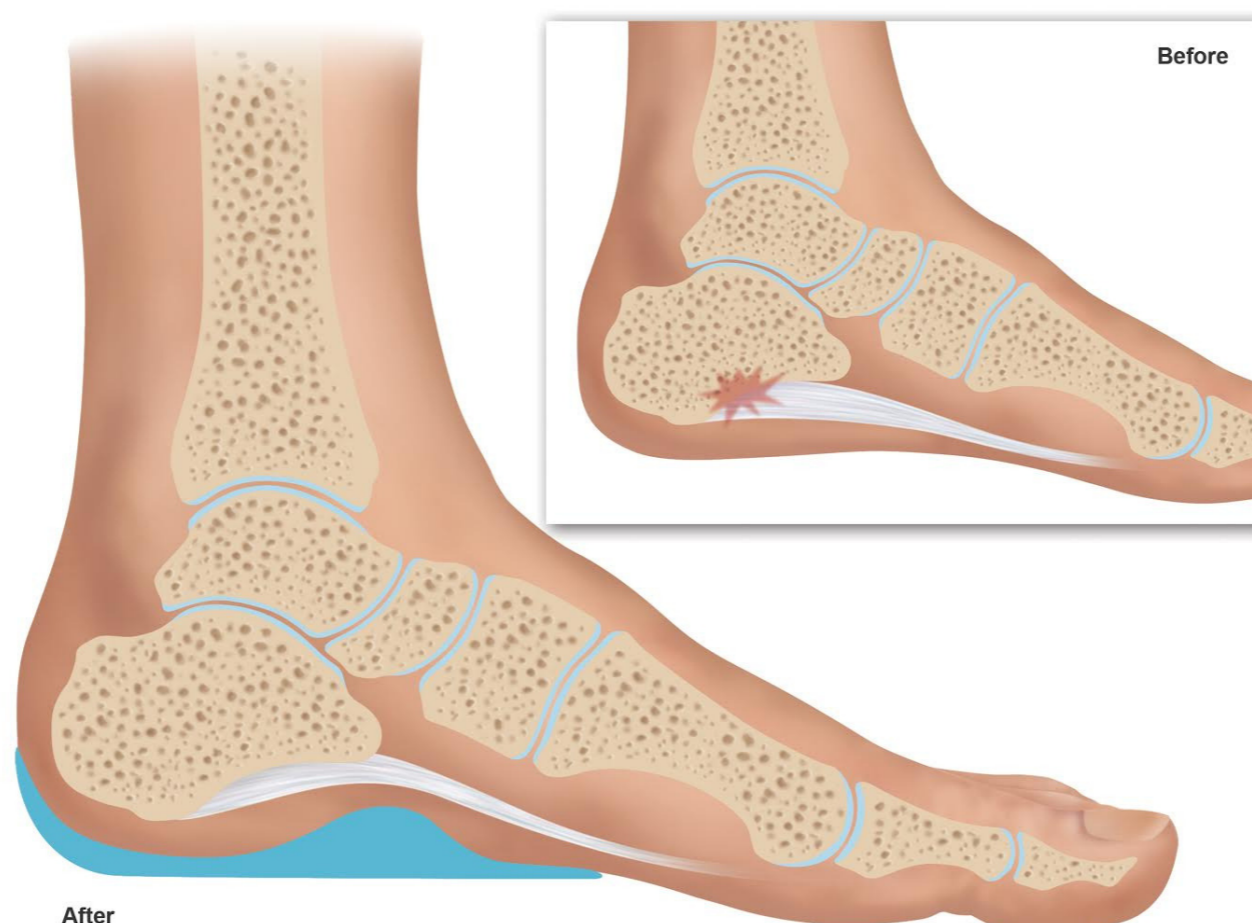
Rest, icing, stretching and supplements can all relieve pain and speed healing, but on-site treatment of the physical problem will be vital to your recovery. Orthotic inserts and orthopedic shoes are two excellent ways you can heal plantar fasciitis naturally with targeted treatment.

Orthopedic Shoes: Orthopedic shoes are the first non-medical treatment many people seek after first learning they're dealing with Plantar Fasciitis. Orthopedic shoes are convenient, can reduce pain and are now being made in a number of styles. Many wearers report a significant decrease in heel pain with daily wear of Plantar Fasciitis shoes. They may be just what the doctor ordered, but before you make a purchase, consider the following possible drawbacks:

- While many orthotic shoes feature special cushioning, it doesn't necessarily work to resolve the underlying condition like Plantar Fasciitis. Unless the shoe has been designed to bring healthy realignment back to the plantar fascia ligament and the biomechanics of the foot, the results may be pain reduction – not resolution.
- The price tag on these types of shoes may come as an unpleasant surprise. Though some brands start in the \$75 range, special shoes for Plantar Fasciitis regularly run in the hundreds of dollars.

Orthotic Inserts:

Orthotic inserts can provide a more cost-effective alternative to promote the realignment of your foot's biomechanics by gently lifting, supporting, stretching and strengthening the plantar fascia ligament. However, it's important to take care in discerning between the different options available!



Fascia-Bar Technology – While many orthotic inserts are available over the counter and even from vending machines in the supermarket, only **Fascia-Bar technology** has been developed and patented specifically for Plantar Fasciitis sufferers. Other inserts can indeed provide cushioning and a degree of comfort, but only the Fascia Bar's patented design realigns the loose or damaged plantar fascia ligament, which spans the arch of the foot and provides therapeutic acupressure to the heel bone, prompting the human body's natural healing processes. You won't find this technology in any other orthotic.



When coupled with RICE and stretching, 9 out of 10 users report that their heel pain is gone for good. Fascia-Bar technology can be found in Heel That Pain's full line of plantar fasciitis products, including popular Heel Seats and wraps.

Medical Treatments for Plantar Fasciitis

When is it time to involve the help of a medical professional for plantar fasciitis? Keep in mind that about 85% of people who suffer from plantar fasciitis will recover within a few weeks by using RICE, stretching, and orthotic inserts. However, 15% of cases may require some medical help.

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

It's important to see a doctor if you begin experiencing numbness in your feet or heels, fever along with the pain of plantar fasciitis, or if you start experiencing pain even when you're not putting weight on the affected areas. You should also call a doctor if you've been treating your plantar fasciitis with stretching, RICE, and orthotics for a few weeks, and you haven't seen improvement. A general practitioner is a great place to start. Other options for medical assistance include a sports medicine specialist if your pain is a result of a specialized activity, or an orthopedic specialist if your symptoms are especially severe. These medical professionals may recommend any of the following treatments:

ESWT

Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy, also known as ESWT, is a noninvasive option for pain relief from heel pain associated with plantar fasciitis. It directs shock waves, or sound waves, onto the heel of the foot to stimulate the body's healing process while simultaneously over-stimulating nerves to reduce sensitivity and pain in the foot.

The procedure is noninvasive, takes only 20 minutes, and performed on an outpatient basis. ESWT cannot be administered to patients who have pacemakers or are taking certain medications, and is primarily used as a last measure if other nonsurgical treatments are unsuccessful, because of potential negative side effects that can include pain, bruising, swelling, and expense.

ULTRASOUND

Ultrasound therapy uses a hollow needle and high frequency/low amplitude sound to target damaged foot tissue. The treatment only takes 90 seconds on average, and some patients show considerable foot pain reduction that lasts. One study of patients who were treated with ultrasound showed a 90 percent improvement, with consistent results six months later.



Negatives of ultrasound include the cost, the invasive nature of the treatment, and inconsistency among other studies about its efficacy. Some studies cite very little pain improvement, while others cite only moderate improvement.

SURGERY

Surgery to correct plantar fasciitis is seen as a last-resort option when all more conservative treatments have failed. It's generally warranted in only about 5% of cases. The procedure involves making incisions in the plantar fascia ligament or detaching the ligament from the heel bone to relieve tension. If heel spurs are present, these will typically be removed during surgery as well.

Total recovery time is three to six weeks, but patients must wait as long as three months before participating in high-impact activities such as jogging.

About 75% of Plantar Fasciitis sufferers experience relief from heel pain following surgery, while 25% do not. Because Plantar Fascia Surgery is an invasive procedure and requires a considerable recovery period, it should be viewed as appropriate only in extreme cases which haven't been resolved via non-invasive methods.

Conclusion

Dealing with the pain of plantar fasciitis can be life changing--but it doesn't have to be a life sentence. By arming yourself with knowledge and taking charge of your healing, you can get back to the activities you love and feel like yourself again.

If you have additional questions about heel pain and plantar fasciitis, don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to help get you back on your feet--literally. Send us an email, give us a call, or even send us a text to speak directly with one of our Heel Specialists.

877-215-3200

Care@HeelThatPain.com

www.heelthatpain.com