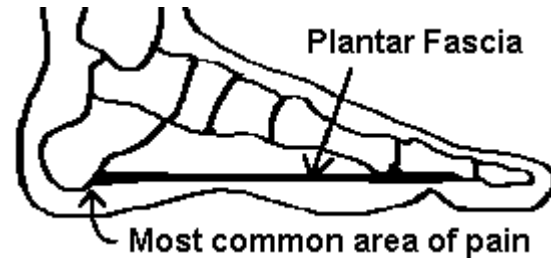
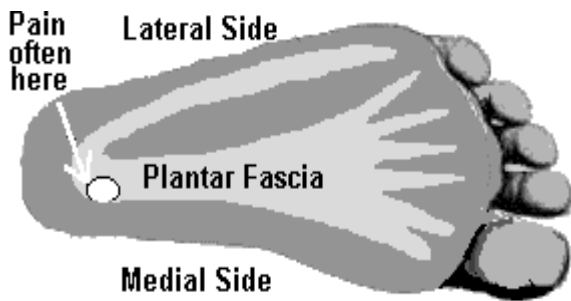


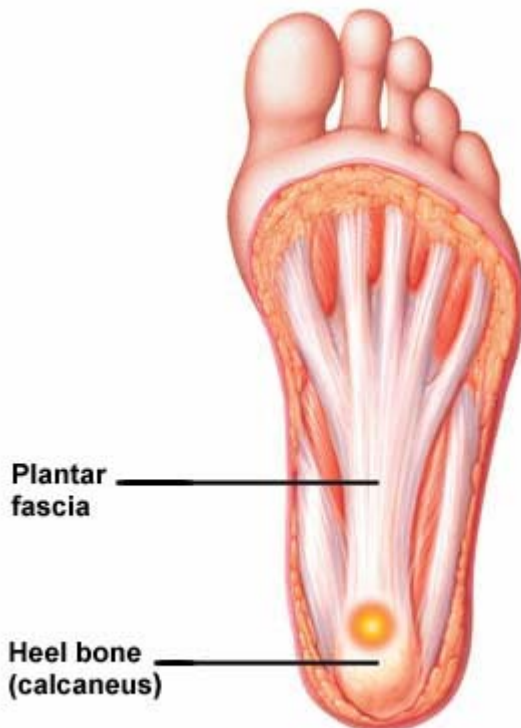
## Plantar Fasciitis

### What is Plantar Fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis is the inflammation of your plantar fascia, a thin layer of tissue that runs along the bottom of your foot and supports the arch. The plantar fascia endures tension that is approximately two times one's body weight. This tension is increased if there is lack of flexibility in the calf muscles. Any increase in body weight causes an increase in tension in the fascia. Due to the repetitive nature of walking, plantar fasciitis may be a repetitive stress disorder (RSD) similar to tennis elbow.

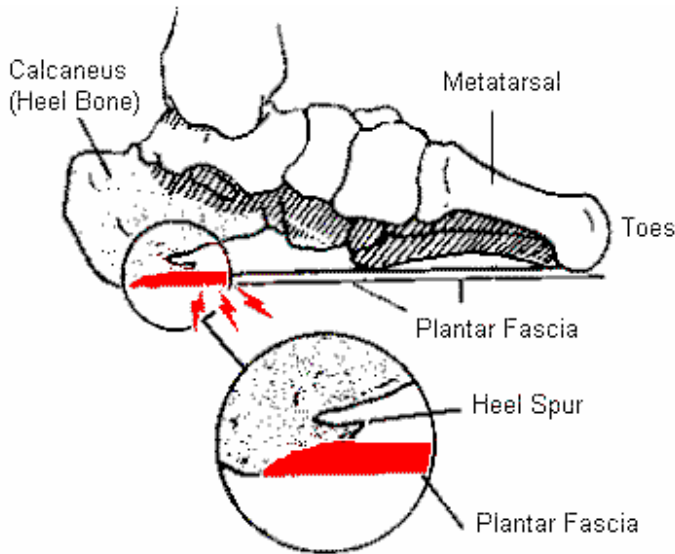


Patients often report that the pain "moves around." The pain can be mild or debilitating. It can last a few months, become permanent, or come and go every few months or years for the rest of a patient's life with no obvious explanation. Unfortunately, it can take 12 to 36 hours after harmful activity before the pain increases, so it is not usually obvious what activity is causing an increase in pain.



The condition is usually caused by a change or increase in activities, no arch support, lack of flexibility in the calf muscles, being overweight, a sudden injury, using shoes with little cushion on hard surfaces, using shoes that do not easily bend under the ball of the foot, or spending too much time on the feet. Overweight women are six times more likely to get plantar fasciitis.

Plantar fasciitis is related to "heel spur syndrome", but they are not the same. Heel spurs are not spike-shaped, but flat and shelf-like. They appear like spikes because x-rays are taken from the side looking down along the edge of the shelf. Many people have heel spurs without having any pain.



Because the pain has usually taken weeks or months to increase, improvement can be slow. Patients often have to be patient. It is easy to aggravate the symptoms, so modifying your day to day activities is necessary. Excessive running or standing, inactivity, or inflexible shoes have often caused the pain, and it is this portion of your lifestyle that has to change. Frequent stretching before walking should be emphasized for those with desk jobs.

### Usual symptoms include:

- Classic sign of plantar fasciitis is heel pain with the first few steps in the morning.
- Pain in the heel/sole of the foot/shin.
- Pain on weight bearing where pressure is applied to the heel.
- Difficulty with walking/running, stairs, rising on your toes, squatting with the heels on the ground.

### What physiotherapy can do to help

- We use massage and stretches to lengthen the tightness in the plantar fascia.
- We use electrotherapy and/or acupuncture to relieve pain and promote healing of damaged tissue in the foot and shin.
- We progressively strengthen the weakened tissue by teaching you specific exercises.
- We use tape to control the imbalances until your muscles can do the job.
- We suggest orthotics if your medial arch needs ongoing support.
- We progressively return you to daily and sporting activity.