

Plantar Fasciitis

Plantar fasciitis is a lesion that generally occurs when the plantar fascia is subjected to heavy and repetitive stress.

It can occur in people who engage in activities or sports that involve jumping, running or sprinting.

This injury typically occurs during a period when the intensity or volume of training has been increased too quickly with inadequate recovery. New activity, changing the training surface and rushed transition to another type of unsuitable training shoe can be risk factors.

Structures involved

The **plantar fascia** is the main structure involved in this condition. It represents a band of connective tissue that supports the arch of the foot. Chronic plantar fasciitis may be associated with a small bony growth under the heel called the heel spur. It may not be painful.

Compression of the **lateral plantar nerve** or **medial calcaneal nerve** may cause symptoms of plantar fasciitis.

Signs & Symptoms that you may experience

Each person will react differently after an injury and recovery will depend on the severity of the injury. Plantar fasciitis can produce, but is not limited to, pain, difficulty loading and sometimes edema under the arch of the foot near the heel.

The pain is often characterized as a needle-like sensation. Symptoms are usually present upon waking up, during the first few steps.

Recovery

Your rehabilitation plan, health profile, fitness level and nutritional status affect the recovery time. In most cases, you can expect a full recovery from plantar fasciitis. Typically, your plantar fasciitis can take up to three months to fully recover.

► WHAT TO DO

Early Stage

Relative rest is a good way to protect your plantar fasciitis and prevent your injury from getting worse, but it is important to avoid over-protecting it. A few days of rest by reducing activities that cause pain may be necessary. A quick return to progressive weight-bearing during your daily activities, light cardiovascular exercises that do not cause pain, and mobility exercises will allow for better recovery.

Rehabilitation

Follow your therapist's advice. This will help you manage the various stages of the healing process and increase the odds of successful rehabilitation. Your therapist will accompany you during your rehabilitation program to restore your joint range of motion, flexibility, muscle strength and endurance, balance and functional status.

► WHAT TO AVOID

Do not rely solely on a passive treatment approach. Each phase of the rehabilitation process is important. Patients who actively participate in their treatment plan tend to recover more quickly. Remember that pain is not always a good indicator of tissue damage. As soon as you feel better and the pain is well under control, introduce, in collaboration with your therapist, mild strengthening exercises based on your tolerance.

Despite the fact that flat feet can be a risk factor, research has shown that not everyone with flat feet develops an injury. Rather, poor adaptation to training seems to be the main cause. The use of long-term foot orthoses would therefore not be a preferred treatment. A prefabricated foot orthosis or taping may be indicated during the initial phase, but this should be combined with a therapeutic exercise program.
