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The information in the leaflet was valid at the date of production **December 2019** and is due for review on **December 2021**

Leaflet code: **F-PF-19-821**



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Open Monday – Friday

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– 16.00

Plantar Fasciitis

Helping people to be
the best they can be

What is Plantar Fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis is one of the most common causes of heel pain. It is an inflammation of the band of tissue (the plantar fascia) that extends from the heel to the toes. In this condition, the fascia first becomes irritated and then inflamed, resulting in heel pain.

What are the causes of Plantar Fasciitis?

The most common cause of plantar fasciitis relates to faulty structure of the foot. For example, people who have problems with their arches, either overly flat feet or high-arched feet, are more prone to developing plantar fasciitis. Other causes include:

- Wearing non-supportive footwear on hard, flat surfaces
- Prolonged weight-bearing i.e. spending long hours on feet
- Obesity
- Tight calf muscles and plantar fascia structures
- Change in activity

What are the symptoms of Plantar Fasciitis?

Symptoms include:

- Pain on the bottom of the heel
- Pain in the arch of the foot
- Pain that is usually worse upon arising
- Pain that increases over a period of months
- Swelling on the bottom of the heel

People with plantar fasciitis often describe the pain as worse when they get up in the morning or after they have been sitting for long period of time. After a few minutes of walking, the pain

What are the treatments for Plantar Fasciitis?

Treatment of plantar fasciitis begins with first-line strategies:

- **Stretching** – Exercises that stretch out the calf muscles help ease pain and assist with recovery
- **Avoid going barefoot** – When you walk without shoes, you put undue strain and stress on your plantar fascia
- **Ice** – Putting an ice pack on your heel for 20 minutes several times a day helps reduce inflammation. Place a thin towel between the ice and your heel; do not apply ice directly to the skin
- **Massage** – Massaging ibuprofen gel into the area helps to reduce inflammation
- **Limit activities** – Cut down on extended physical activities to give your heel a rest
- **Shoe modifications** – Oral nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, may be recommended to reduce pain and inflammation

If you still have pain after several weeks, see a podiatrist, who may add one or more of these treatment approaches:

- **Padding, taping and strapping** – Placing pads in the shoe softens the impact of walking. Taping and strapping help support the foot and reduce strain on the fascia
- **Orthotic devices** – Insoles that fit into your shoe help correct the underlying structural abnormalities causing the plantar fasciitis
- **Dorsal night splint** – wearing a night splint allows you to maintain an extended stretch of the plantar fascia while sleeping. This may help reduce the morning pain experienced by some patients
- **Extracorporeal shockwave therapy** – this is a procedure where shockwaves pass through the skin to the injured area, the shockwaves are low-energy sound waves which work by increasing blood flow to the area (this is currently not commissioned by the NHS in this area)
- **Injection therapy** – In some cases, corticosteroid injections are used