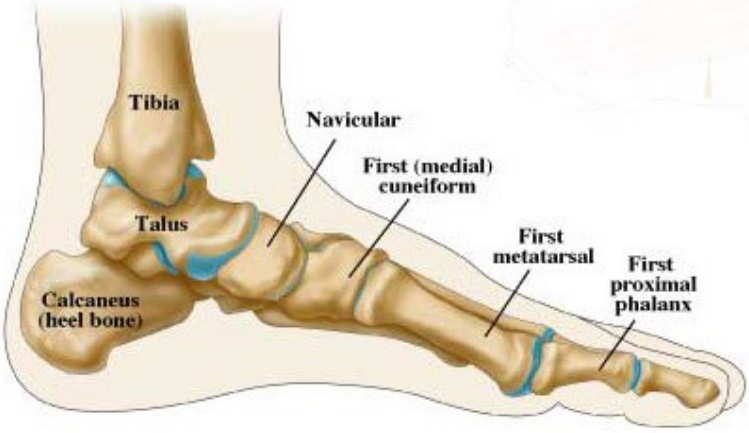
Plantar Fasciitis

Plantar fasciitis is a common condition that causes foot pain. It is soreness (*inflammation*) of the band of tough fibrous tissue on the bottom of the foot that runs from the heel bone (*calcaneus*) to the ball of the foot. The cause of this soreness may be from excessive standing, poor fitting shoes, running on hard surfaces, being overweight, having an abnormal walk, or overuse (this is common in runners) of the painful foot or feet. It is also common in aerobic exercise dancers and ballet dancers.



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SYMPTOMS

Most people with plantar fasciitis complain of:

- Severe pain in the morning on the bottom of their foot especially when taking the first steps out of bed. This pain recedes after a few minutes of walking.
- Severe pain is experienced also during walking following a long period of inactivity.
- Pain is worse when walking barefoot or up stairs

DIAGNOSIS

- Your caregiver will diagnose this condition by examining and feeling your foot.
- Special tests such as x-rays of your foot, are usually not needed.

PREVENTION

- Consult a sports medicine professional before beginning a new exercise program.
- Walking programs offer a good workout. With walking there is a lower chance of overuse injuries common to runners. There is less impact and less jarring of the joints.
- Begin all new exercise programs slowly. If problems or pain develop, decrease the amount of time or distance until you are at a comfortable level.
- Wear good shoes and replace them regularly.
- Stretch your foot and the heel cords at the back of the ankle (*Achilles tendon*) both before and after exercise.
- Run or exercise on even surfaces that are not hard. For example, asphalt is better than pavement.
- Do not run barefoot on hard surfaces.
- If using a treadmill, vary the incline.
- Do not continue to workout if you have foot or joint problems. Seek professional help if they do not improve.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Avoid activities that cause you pain until you recover.
- Use ice or cold packs on the problem or painful areas after working out.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Soft shoe inserts or athletic shoes with air or gel sole cushions may be helpful.
- If problems continue or become more severe, consult a sports medicine caregiver or your own health care provider. Cortisone is a potent anti-inflammatory medication that may be injected into the painful area. You can discuss this treatment with your caregiver.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.

- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Document Released: 09/12/2002 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011
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