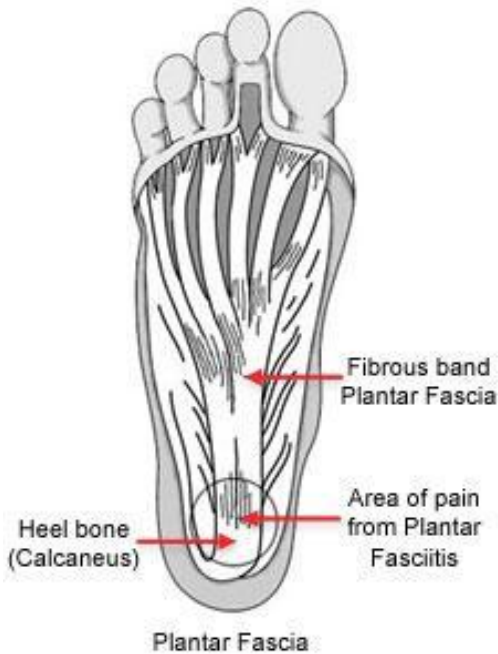


**Plantar Fasciitis** is the inflammation of a thick fibrous (non-elastic) band that runs the length of the foot. The plantar fascia begins at the bottom of the heel and ends at the toes. The pain from plantar fasciitis usually develops gradually but can also begin suddenly.



The telltale symptom is when you get up from sitting or sleeping and you have pain in the heel with the first few steps, but the pain diminishes once you start moving. This is because while resting, the plantar fascia tightens and returns to its original shape. Upon standing, tightness of the plantar fascia results in tension and pain where it attaches to the heel. As the day progresses and the plantar fascia continues to be stretched, the pain often subsides.

This type of foot condition can be caused by a number of factors: foot mechanics (including an overpronating or flat foot, or an excessively high

arch), activity, footwear, ground surface, aging and sometimes weight gain or loss.

Healing of the plantar fascia does not occur quickly and can take up to six months or longer.

X-rays may indicate a bone spur, which is often mistakenly thought of as the source of heel pain. In fact, the heel spur is a result of the abnormal force of the fascia on the heel bone. This tension and pulling from the fascia creates more force on the heel and therefore a heel spur forms. Reducing the tension in the plantar fascia is the treatment goal, and this can be accomplished with stretching exercises, icing, and through the use of off-the-shelf arch supports and custom orthotics.

## Treatments:

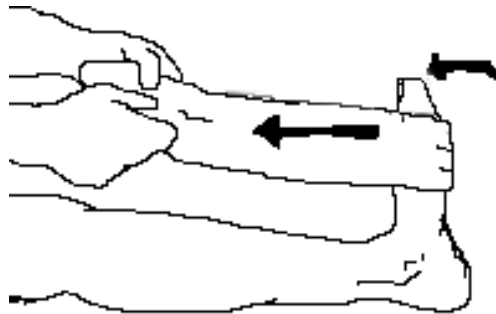
### Stretching

Using a towel, hook the towel around your toes and pull back, pulling your toes to your knee. If you are able, you can also do this stretch using your hands by grabbing the toes and pulling your foot and toes towards your knee. The knee does not have to be straight.

Pulling the toes back as well as the foot increases the stretch on the fascia. Hold this position for 20-30 seconds and repeat for 3-4 minutes *every* morning and after rest.

When your weight is off your foot, as is the case when you are sleeping or sitting, the fascia tightens causing pain upon standing.

You must stretch the fascia **before you get up in the morning and after sitting.**



### Icing

Place a bag of ice (frozen peas or popcorn works well) over the painful area for 10-12 minutes. Remember to always ice **after** stretching, and stay off your feet for at least 30 minutes after icing to allow the treatment to work.

### Other Treatments

Other treatment options include orthotics, supportive footwear, physiotherapy, cortisone injections, night splints, acupuncture, and massage therapy.