**Plantar Fasciitis: First stage treatment**

This program is based on Heel Clinic data collected from 10 000 patients over 15 years. Plantar Fasciitis is the straining of the Plantar Fascial ligament like structure in the mid-fibres (arch) or at the insertion point of the calcaneous (heel bone). This develops into a miro-fibre tear if not treated correctly and early enough. This painful weight bearing ailment may continue and intensify for months and sometimes years. This program should be followed as closely as possible for maximum benefit.

1. Start by icing the heel using a bag of crushed ice or ice pack for 15-20 minutes every evening. Elevate the heel and use no other icing method e.g. rolling the feet over cans or bottles of iced water it aggravates the plantar fascia. No heat whatsoever.
2. Light and gentle calf muscle stretches. 3 times per day for 60 seconds. A simple “Wall” stretch is gentle and not too aggressive. Too vigorous stretching can irritate the plantar fascial insertion. More specific stretch may be applied by pulling gently back on the toes.
3. Calf muscle massage is usually of benefit to release the tension which makes its way to the heel bone and into the plantar fascia.
4. Avoid bare feet, thongs, scuffs, sandals, ballet flats or flat shoes if possible. This creates increased load on the plantar fascia. Use joggers/runners to provide heel height especially when standing up after a period of resting.
5. Stop all quick movement sports/activities. Tennis, football, netball, hockey etc. Cease the use of treadmills or weight bearing exercises (squats, leg presses, etc). Golf and bush walking may also aggravate the torn tissue due to the undulating surfaces and time on feet.
6. Anti-inflammatories may help, but they are not a cure. Cortisone is a powerful steroidal anti-inflammatory and may only mask the pain for a short period and potentially weaken the tissue.
7. Avoid wearing arch based orthotics/supports due to “lifting upwards” applying further tension against the plantar fascial fibre. However use of a good silicon heel cup may provide temporary relief.
8. Pain in the feet immediately on weight bearing after rest can be alleviated by gently stretching the calf muscles before standing.
9. Research shows that strengthening of the calf, inverters, everters, and toe flexors play an important role in overcoming Plantar Fasciitis, your Physio can assess and then give you a suitable exercise program.

1. If your Plantar Fasciitis proves to be stubborn, please contact us at Southside Physio for further treatment and support.

**Southside Physio – Tuggeranong 62931955, Lanyon 62232366, Woden 62825010**

This advice has been developed in partnership with The Heel Clinic  - [www.heelclinic.com.au](http://www.heelclinic.com.au)