

# HEEL PAIN

## WHAT IS PLANTAR FASCIITIS?

The plantar fascia is a ligament that stretches along the sole of the foot from the base of the heel to all 5 toes, with a thick, rope-like band connecting the heel and the base of the big toe. The plantar fascia is crucial to providing 'spring' in our step.

Plantar Fasciitis simply refers to inflammation of the plantar fascia. It is characterised by:

- Pain on the base and inner aspect of the heel
- Pain is worse first thing in the morning or after prolonged rest - 'first step pain'
- Pain will generally get better as you 'warm up' and then get worse with over use



The plantar fascia is inflamed, irritated or torn by activities that overload this spring:

- Walking up and down steps or ladders
- Prolonged squatting (ie: gardening)
- Walking on uneven surfaces or up and down steep inclines
- Hard surfaces or running - >>load

The plantar fascia can also become injured when the integrity of the arch is compromised:

- 'Flat' or pronated feet
- Unsupportive shoes
- Other injuries effecting the way that you walk

Other conditions that are similar to Plantar Fasciitis include:

Lower back injury; Achilles tendon injury; Foreign body, wart or corn

## ...and how do I make it stop

The key to solving any problem properly is diagnosis. Balanced Podiatry is committed to thorough assessment and diagnosis, and then offering a range of treatment options to suit the individual.

Initially strapping, reducing activity and padding in your shoes can provide pain relief while we work through the process of diagnosis. The 3 steps below will be suggested for you to do at home or while you wait for an appointment to get professional advice and treatment.

1

### CHANGE YOUR SHOES

SUPPORTIVE SHOES WILL HELP YOUR FOOT FUNCTION ANATOMICALLY. CUSHIONING IS ALSO

2

### STRETCHES

STRETCH THE TISSUES ON THE SOLE OF THE FOOT. USE A FROZEN BOTTLE/ TENNIS BALL OR CAN OF

3

### ADAPT

MODIFY YOUR ACTIVITY UNTIL PAIN HAS IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY. LIMPING WILL ONLY MAKE IT WORSE

#### SHOES

Many foot pain can be eased just with changing your foot wear. It is also common for foot pain to coincide with a new shoe or change in shoes (ie thongs and sandals over summer)

#### STRETCHES

Stretching the plantar fascia and calf muscle group can help. The calf can be stretched by standing on a step, the ball of the foot planted on the step and the heel dropping downwards. The sole of the foot can be stretched and massaged by rolling the foot over a ball, can or foam roller



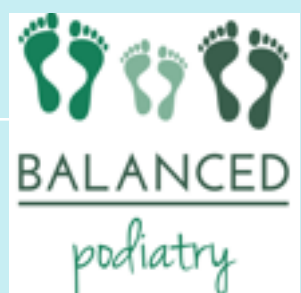
#### ADAPT

You may have started a new job or exercise regime or be recovering from another injury. Avoiding situations that cause pain or adjusting your activity is useful. For example, if you stand all day at a counter a rubber mat may make all the difference to your foot comfort.

#### BALANCED PODIATRY

Airlie Waller is the sole practitioner of Balanced Podiatry.

Airlie is an experienced level II accredited sports trainer and Certificate 3 Fitness instructor. She plays competitive sport as well as regular road running and yoga - giving her the professional and personal experience to help guide you through any musculoskeletal injury.



email: [enquiries@balancedpodiatry.com.au](mailto:enquiries@balancedpodiatry.com.au)

phone: 08 7078 0357