

Information and exercise sheet

Plantar heel pain

Plantar heel pain (sometimes called plantar fasciitis) causes pain around the heel, arch and bottom of the foot. It can be very painful, but you can usually treat it yourself. You might find it helpful to rest your foot in a raised position whenever you can.

Use an ice pack on the painful area for up to 20 minutes every few hours. Frozen vegetables wrapped in a tea towel work just as well if you don't have an ice pack at home. Your doctor, physiotherapist or podiatrist can give you advice on suitable shoes and insoles. Doing some gentle stretching exercises, such as those on this sheet, can improve your pain and your recovery.

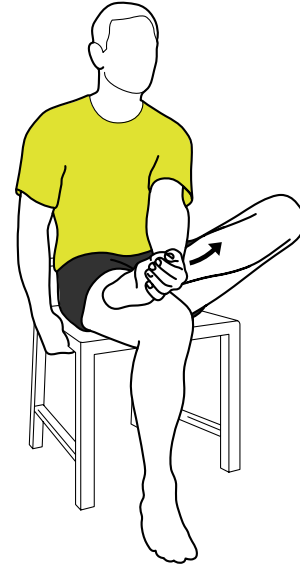
It's a good idea to carry on with these exercises even after the pain goes away, as this can reduce the chance of it coming back. Make sure you wear supportive footwear, and do a warm-up and stretch out your calf muscles before and after exercise.

Exercises

Many people find the following exercises helpful. If you need to, adjust the position so that it's comfortable. Try to do these exercises regularly. Do each one a few times to start with, to get used to them, and gradually increase how much you do.

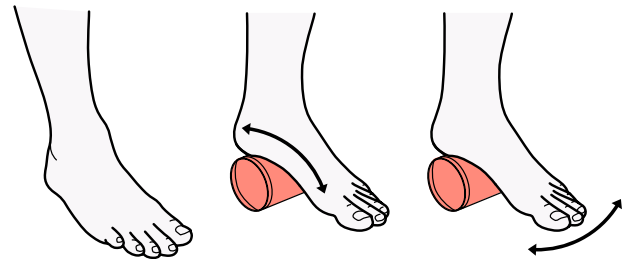
1. Sitting plantar fascia stretch

Sit down and cross one foot over your knee. Grab the base of your toes and pull them back towards your body until you feel a comfortable stretch. Hold for 15 to 20 seconds and repeat 3 times.



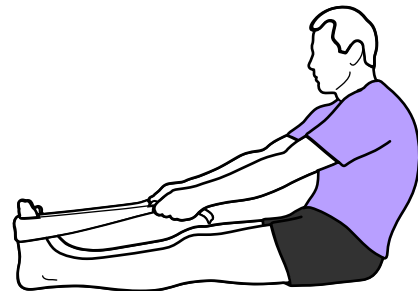
2. Plantar fascia stretch

Sit down and rest the arch of your foot on a round object, such as a tin of beans. Roll the arch in all directions for a few minutes. Repeat this exercise at least twice a day.



3. Achilles tendon and plantar fascia stretch

Loop a towel around the ball of your foot and pull your toes towards your body, keeping your knee straight. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times on each foot.

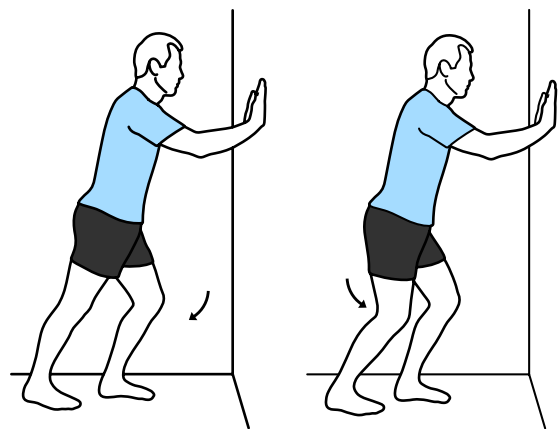


4. Wall push

a) Facing a wall, put both hands on the wall at shoulder height and place one foot in front of the other. The front foot should be approximately 30 cm (12 inches) from the wall.

With the front knee bent and the back knee straight, bend the front knee towards the wall until the calf in your back leg feels tight. Relax and repeat 10 times.

b) Repeat a) but bring the back foot forward a little, so that the back knee is slightly bent. Repeat this 10 times.





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