

## **Plantar Fasciitis**

Plantar fasciitis is inflammation of the thick tissue on the bottom of the foot. This tissue is called the plantar fascia. It connects the heel bone to the toes and creates the arch of the foot.

## **Statistics**

- Plantar fasciitis is the most common foot condition treated by healthcare providers.
- An estimated 2 million Americans are affected by plantar fasciitis each year, and over the course of a lifetime as much as 10% of the population are affected.
- Plantar fasciitis is the third most common running injury behind patellofemoral pain and iliotibial band friction syndrome.
- It is the most common foot injury runner's experience.
- It is seen in both men and women. However, it most often affects active men ages 40-70.

## **Symptoms**

- Pain affects the bottom of the foot in the plantar medial heel region
- Pain is worse when taking the first few steps after getting out of bed or after sitting for prolonged times
- Foot pain often improves after walking for a few minutes
- Pain will develop after, not during, exercise
- Pain may develop slowly over time, or suddenly after intense activity

## **Risk Factors**

- Repetitive high impact activities such as running
- Foot arch problems (both flat feet and high arches)
- Increasing activity level or participating in a new activity
- Having a BMI greater than 30 or a sudden weight gain
- Tight calf muscle that affects the ability to flex the foot and toes
- A job/sport that involves prolonged standing or other weight-bearing activities
- In addition, it has been suggested that decreased extension of the first metatarsophalangeal joint also contributes to plantar fasciitis

## **Mainstream Interventions**

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) to reduce pain and inflammation
- Stretching calf/Achilles tendon
- Wearing shoes with good support and cushion
- Resting
- Ice Massage
- Massage foot with golf ball
- Calcaneal taping or low-Dye taping
- ASTYM
- Ultrasound or Iontophoresis
- Steroid injections
- Foot orthotics
- Night splints

## **How the J Wedge works**

- The J Wedge provides a specific, consistent stretch of the plantar fascia using an effective angle.
- When done with big toe, then two middle toes and then the last two toes, it provides three stretches to the plantar fascia.
- The stretch the J Wedge provides will improve extension range of motion of the metatarsophalangeal joints.
- Treatments aimed at restoring limited extension range of motion of the metatarsophalangeal joints will positively affect the plantar fasciitis or even prevent it.
- Forty-four percent of orthopedic surgeons favored initiation of plantar fascia-specific stretching as the management of plantar fasciitis of less than four months, compared to the use of anti-inflammatory or structural support modalities.
- Treatments that should be attempted first are those that are low-cost and low-risk, such as stretching of the plantar fascia, stretching of the Achilles tendon and patient education.

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