



## FOOT & ANKLE SPECIALISTS, P.C.

*Specializing in Medicine and Surgery of the Foot & Ankle*

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### Plantar Fasciitis Home Care

Plantar fasciitis is inflammation of a ligament (the plantar fascia) on the bottom of your foot that feels like heel pain. The plantar fascia is a continuation of the Achilles tendon and it attaches to the heel bone. When the Achilles tendon is tight the foot flattens out at the arch, spraining the plantar fascia. Commonly, this pain is called "Heel Spur Syndrome." You may or may not have an actual heel spur, seen on x-ray. The heel spur is not actually the cause of your pain, but more a symptom of the inflammatory process at your heel. This pain can be treated successfully with conservative care before surgery is deemed necessary. Following the instructions below and your doctor's recommendations will give you the best prognosis and the fastest recovery.

#### 1) Stretching Exercises:

- Achilles tendon stretches: While sitting, using a long bath towel, loop the towel behind the ball of your foot. Keep the knee locked straight and pull the towel towards you. Hold the foot in the stretched position for 20-30 seconds, then relaxes. Repeat this 10 times at least three times a day.
- An alternative to this exercise is standing arm length away from the wall with heels on the ground and the knee straight, then lean into the wall and hold for 20-30 seconds. Repeat this 10 times at least three times a day.
- Arch massage: use a cold can of soda from the refrigerator. While sitting roll the cold can of soda in the arch and bottom of your foot. This provides a soothing massage and anti-inflammatory activity.
- Alphabet with the big toe: before getting out of bed or standing after you have been sitting for more than ½ hour, write the alphabet in the air with your big toe. This helps loosen the tight ligament, so you don't continue to injure it every time you stand.

#### 2) Anti-inflammatory Treatment:

- Take the prescribed anti-inflammatory every day; you must maintain adequate levels of the medication in your blood for it to help you. This is not an "As needed" medication.
- Roll heel on frozen water bottle for 15 minutes, 3 times a day and massage the painful area.

#### 3) Arch Support:

- Never go barefoot. Walking barefoot strains the inflamed fascia.
- Always put on your shoes and arch supports before standing.
- Wear comfortable shoe gear, gym shoes or orthopedic shoes.
- Wear your arch supports in every pair of shoes (if you cannot fit on a pair of shoes with the inserts, don't wear those shoes...save them for when your foot is back to normal.)
- Limit standing and walking as much as possible!