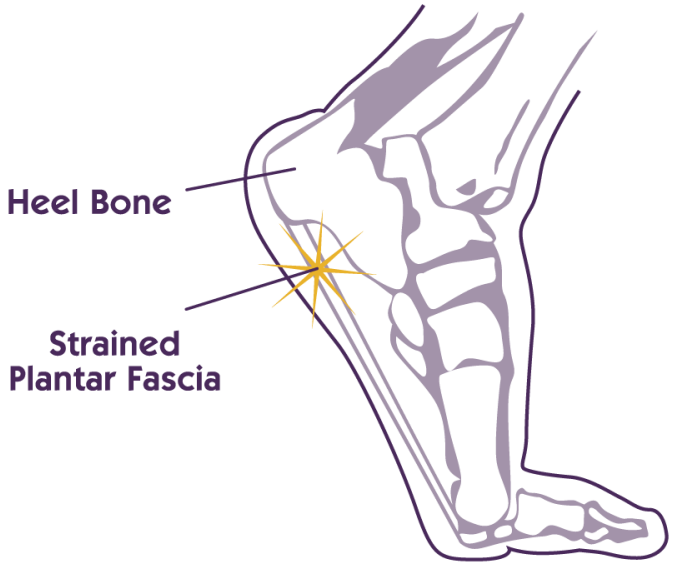
PLANTAR FASCIITIS

DESCRIPTION:

An inflammation of the plantar fascia, a thick fibrous band of tissue in the bottom of the foot, which runs from the heel to the base of the toes. When placed under increased stress, the plantar fascia can stretch and tear, resulting in inflammation of this tissue. The tears are soon covered with scar tissue, which is less flexible than the fascia and aggravates the problem.



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:

- Pain on the sole of the foot, often localized to the front of the heel.
- Pain is usually worse first thing in the morning. The first steps of the day are often the most painful.
- Pain often aggravated by standing, walking or running, with running being the most painful.
- Pain is described as sharp or dull.

CAUSES:

- Tight calf muscles and Achilles tendon.
- Overpronation (feet flatten on impact).
- High arches and rigid feet.
- Biomechanically incorrect or worn out shoes.
- Overtraining

TREATMENT:

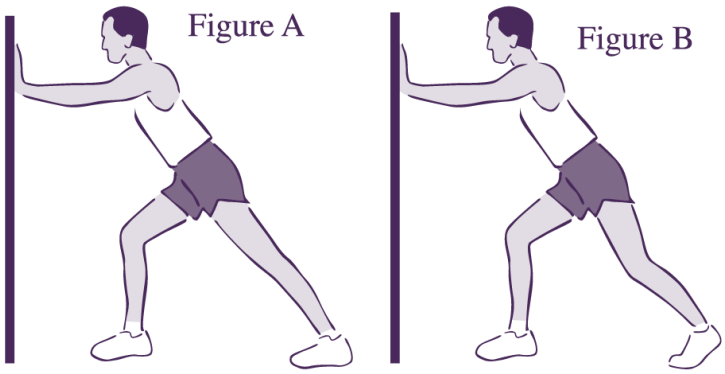
- Reduce training load and intensity.
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (Ibuprofen/Naproxen).
- Apply ice to arch of the foot.
- Massage the arch of the foot.
- Stretching of the gastrocnemius and soleus muscles.
- Return to running gradually as symptoms subside.

IF CONSERVATIVE TREATMENT FAILS:

- Physical Therapy, if injury doesn't respond to self-treatment in 1 to 2 weeks, which if appropriate will include custom fabricated orthotics.
- Orthopaedic physician for cortisone injection or for surgery to release the plantar fascia.

ALTERNATIVE EXERCISES TO LESSEN THE STRESS ON THE LEG:

- Swimming, pool running, cycling (in low gear).
- Avoid any exercise that places strain onto the soles of the feet.



Hold for 30 seconds, 5 reps each

PREVENTION:

- Stretching the calf muscles 2-3 times a day (see Figure A & B).
- Stretching the arch of the foot 2-3 times a day.
- Apply ice after running.
- Gradually progress your training program.
- Incorporate rest into training program.

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