

# Plantar Fasciitis

## Information for Patients



**This leaflet has been written to give you the right information about plantar fasciitis and what you can do to help with your recovery.**

### What is plantar fasciitis?

Firstly, plantar fasciitis is not a dangerous issue. It normally relates to pain on the bottom of the heel.

Plantar fasciitis refers to an irritation of the fascia (a layer of connective tissue) on the bottom of your foot where it attaches to your heel bone.

### What causes plantar fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis is a common complaint and is often associated with a change in the amount of work you might be asking or have asked of your foot to do.

In most cases, either doing more of something (walking/ hiking/running), doing something new or different (new job or hobby) or simply doing less and then getting back into activity (e.g. heavy gardening in the spring after doing less in the winter) can be enough to cause an irritation. Carrying excessive body weight along with some of the above causes can be a factor.

### What are the common symptoms?

**Pain:** Plantar fasciitis will typically cause discomfort on the underside of your foot towards the heel but this may travel up the calf or towards the toes for some people. Discomfort is often noticed when standing, walking or taking weight on the foot especially first thing in the morning.

**Other areas becoming sore:** Discomfort will normally make you use the foot/ankle differently (e.g. you may limp) and sometimes this can make other areas become sore.

### What can I do to help myself?

**Calm it down:** At the moment, there will be things your foot/ankle likes to do and some things that it is less happy to do. Calming it down simply means looking at the things it doesn't like and trying to make some adjustments or changes to make it easier for yourself.

For example, you might find that walking the dog for 30 minutes or putting your foot to the floor first thing in the morning may be sore. By taking the dog for a shorter walk or taking a few breaks whilst walking might help; just like 'warming the foot up' first thing in the morning with some exercises or wearing slippers may be useful things to consider whilst it is unhappy.

**Pain control:** Applying something warm/cold around your heel may be useful in helping with some of the pain (do remember to wrap your hot water bottle/cold pack in a towel before applying it to your skin to avoid burns).

**Build it back up again:** Movement is medicine for your body and your foot is no different. Calming the issue down (as described above) is often the best place to start and sometimes this might take a few weeks to help. Once your ankle feels a little calmer, it is a good idea to start to 'build it back up again'. What this means is that once the foot is able to tolerate some gentle exercise, then it is worth starting some.

### Will it get better?

For most people, planter fasciitis will not be a pleasant experience but reassuringly, it does have the potential to get better. By understanding the issue as best you can and by adjusting what is sore to then allow you to explore some exercise/s, is often the best formula for success.

If you would like to know more about planter fasciitis or find a greater choice of exercises, you can explore our dedicated webpage.

Search online: [Norfolk and Waveney MSK services](#) 'plantar fasciitis'

# Exercises



Stand with your heel over the edge of a step and a folded towel under your toes. Raise yourself in the tip toe position. Slowly (3-5 seconds) lower your heels down again.

Repeat 12-15 times for 3 sets. Complete this every other day.

If/when this exercise become easier, complete the exercise using weight (in a backpack on your back).

When using weight, repeat 8-10 times for 3 sets. Complete this every other day.



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