

Plantar Fasciitis

What is plantar fasciitis?

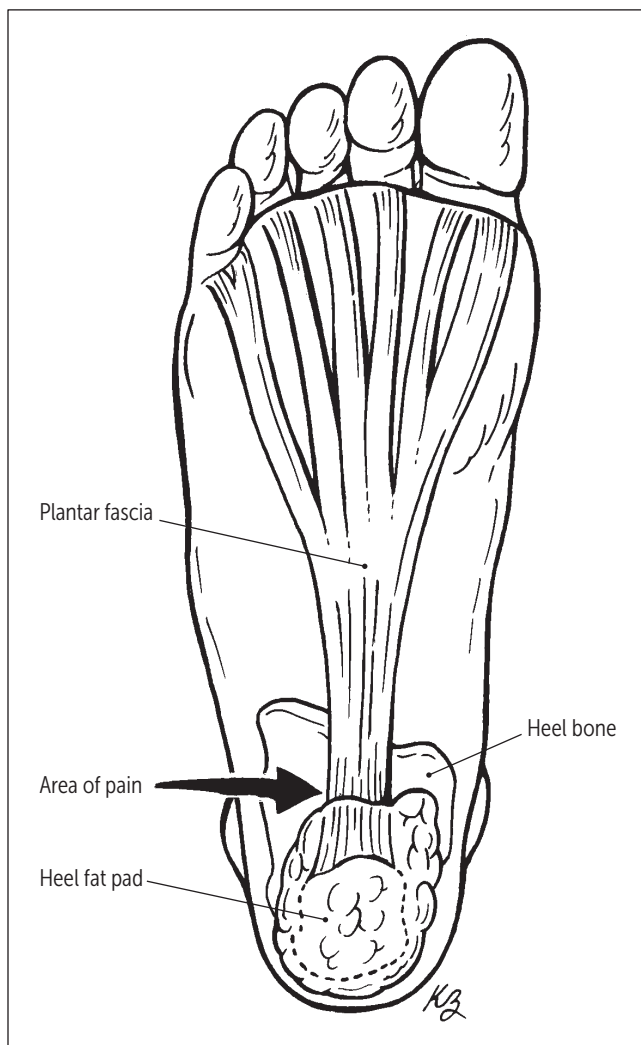
The plantar fascia (PLAN-tar FASH-ee-ah) is a band of tough fiber on the bottom of your foot (*see drawing*). It runs from your toes to your heel and forms the arch of your foot. Plantar fasciitis (fash-ee-EYE-tis) happens when this tissue is injured. This makes your heel hurt when you walk. The pain is usually worse when you get out of bed in the morning or when you walk after sitting for a long time. Walking barefoot, running, or walking up stairs may make the pain worse.

Who gets plantar fasciitis?

About one in 10 people will have this problem at some point. People who spend most of the day on their feet, who are overweight, or who cannot move their feet and ankles well are more likely to get plantar fasciitis. Runners are also more likely to get it.

How do I know if I have it?

Your doctor can tell you if you have plantar fasciitis by asking you questions and examining your foot. You probably will not need special tests. Most people with plantar fasciitis have pain on the bottom of the foot by the heel.



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Illustration by Kathryn Born



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Plantar Fasciitis *(continued)*

What should I do if I have it?

You will feel better if you rest and take medicines such as ibuprofen (one brand: Motrin) or naproxen (one brand: Aleve). It will help to stretch your plantar fascia and do certain exercises. For more severe pain, you may need to wear special shoe inserts. Most people get better within a year without needing surgery.

What can I do to keep from getting it?

To prevent plantar fasciitis, you should wear comfortable shoes and stay at a healthy weight. If you want to become more active, don't do too much at once.

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