
What are Heel Spurs?

Plantar fasciitis is commonly referred to as heel spurs, a common foot problem. It consists of sharp pain most noticeable upon rising in the morning or towards the end of the day. It is characterized by severe pain the first few steps after resting and gradually changes to a dull ache after walking a distance. It is aggravated by walking barefoot or standing on hard surfaces such as tile or concrete. Excess weight and thin soled foot wear are often contributing factors.

Treatment

Treatment often includes supporting the arch of the foot with prescription orthotics (custom arch supports). The body uses a ligament called the plantar fascia to support the foot naturally. When it is over stressed, it becomes inflamed and can form a type of bursitis, which can eventually lead to formation of a spur. The inflammation is often treated with

anti-inflammatory medicines, or local cortisone injections. Ultrasound or deep penetrating heat is sometimes used as an adjunct therapy. Physical therapy is sometimes indicated especially when this condition is combined with a tight Achilles tendon or heel cord. Stretching the calf helps to relieve some of the pressure on the plantar fascia. Early treatment of heel spur syndrome has the best response to these treatments. Surgery is performed to relieve the severe pain by releasing a portion of the plantar fascia from the heel spur, this lengthens the fascia approximately 1 cm relieving the pressure from the heel. This new surgical approach is done through the use of an endoscope much like the arthroscope is used in knee surgery. Two tiny incisions about 3" are made on either side of the heel and the surgery is done with special instruments watching a monitor from the endoscopic camera. This treatment is used when other measures have failed.

Things you can do to help make your treatment more successful:

- 1) Do not go barefoot, even indoors if you will be standing or walking.
 - 2) Cushion work areas, bathroom, and kitchen with padded mats or carpet.
 - 3) Wear good supportive shoes. Walking, hiking, or tennis type shoes are best, no slip ons or boat shoes.
 - 4) Over-the-counter arch supports, not cushions, are good. The firmer and thicker the arch the better. Custom made arch supports, or prescription orthotics are best.
 - 5) Stretch the foot and heel cord at the beginning of your day.
 - 6) Ice at the end of the day. A frozen juice concentrate can, or cold soda can placed on the floor accomplishes stretching and icing by rolling your foot back and forth across it.
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Exercises/Stretching

Lean forward against a wall, keeping one knee straight while bending the other knee. Bend forward toward stretching the heel cord and arch of the straightened leg. Hold the stretched position, just before the heel lifts off the ground for 10 seconds and repeat 20 times. Reverse the position of your legs to stretch the other side.

Stand on the bottom step of stairs or other suitable slightly elevated platform. Position yourself so your over the edge and you are balanced on the ball of your foot. Slowly lower your heels until you feel a good and hold that position for 10 seconds, repeat 20 times.

Do not attempt this exercise if you have poor balance!



the wall slowly lifts off the ground

heels are hanging stretch in your calf



Sample Prescription For Insurance

Custom Molded Orthotics
L3000 LT & RT

\$125 \$125

Diagnosis: Heel Spur Syndrome
(or your particular problem)

Steinberg Podiatry Associates, P.A. has been dedicated to health care since 1931, specializing in the medical and surgical treatment of the foot, ankle, and leg. We have offices located in Ocala, Belleview, and Spruce Creek South. Our physicians have staff privileges at Ocala Regional Medical Center, Munroe Regional Medical Center, Surgery Center of Ocala, and The Wound Care and Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment Center.

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