

## Plantar Fasciitis—A Pain in the Foot



**M**ost heel pain is due to a condition called **plantar fasciitis**, inflammation and/or degeneration of the plantar fascia, a thick connective tissue running from the heel bone to the ball of the foot that helps maintain the arch of the foot and transmits your weight across the foot as you walk or run. Typically, symptoms are at their worst when you wake up in the morning. The following conditions can cause or aggravate plantar fasciitis:

- walking with an abnormal step;
- prolonged walking or standing;
- sports such as running or basketball;
- obesity;
- lack of arch support;
- inflexible Achilles tendons and calf muscles; and/or
- walking barefoot on hard surfaces.

Fortunately, most cases of plantar fasciitis respond to basic treatment options. Until your plantar fascia is healthy again, you may have to **rest your foot** by modifying the types of physical activities you perform. Pain may be treated with **icing and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs** (NSAIDs) such as aspirin, ibuprofen or naproxen, if your doctor approves. In some cases, your physician may prescribe **an oral or injectable corticosteroid**. **Orthotic shoe inserts, night splints and proper footwear** may help, too. When treatment is unsuccessful, **surgery** to release the tension of the plantar fascia ligament may be considered.

**Most importantly, an exercise regimen designed to strengthen and stretch the plantar fascia can bring long-term relief.** We can design a complete program to relieve the pain of plantar fasciitis, while strengthening your foot to help prevent recurrence of the problem.