



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

Sports Medicine: Plantar Fasciitis

Plantar fasciitis (plan-taar fa-shee-ai-tus) occurs when there is pain and stiffness of the main fascia (a fibrous connective tissue) on the bottom of the foot. The plantar fascia connects the heel bone to the toes and gives the arch of the foot support. Sometimes there may be a partial or full tear of the fascia.

Signs and Symptoms

- Pain that is sharp at first, then turns into a dull ache
- Pain felt with first steps taken in the morning and after long periods of rest (sitting)
- Pain and tenderness in the sole of the foot under the heel, which can often be felt into the arch

Increased Risk

- Obesity
- Flat feet
- Poor warm up before practice or competition
- Sports that include running or jogging and sudden stops or changes in direction
- Standing or walking for long times
- Poor physical conditioning (strength and flexibility)

Treatment

- Medicine
 - Anti-inflammatory medicines, such as ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) or naproxen (Aleve®), may be recommended. Take these as directed by your doctor or health care provider.
 - Other minor pain relievers, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®).

- Use of cold
 - Cold should be applied for 10 to 15 minutes every 2 to 3 hours for swelling and after any activity that makes symptoms worse. Use ice packs or an ice massage.
- Orthopedic aids
 - Wearing splints at night may be helpful.
 - A heel cup or insert in the shoe may help to relieve pressure on the heel.
- Rehabilitation
 - Rehab with a physical therapist or athletic trainer may be prescribed to help strengthen the muscles in the heel and tendons.
- Surgery
 - In rare cases where other treatment(s) fail, surgery may be needed.

How to Prevent

- Proper warm-up and stretching before practice or competition.
- Wear proper shoes with a rubber or felt heel cushion, and good arches or cushioned arch support.
- Maintain good calf, ankle, and foot flexibility, muscular strength, and endurance.
- Avoid activity that puts a constant strain on the foot.
- Maintain proper body weight.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor, health care provider, or the Sports Medicine team at (614) 355-6000 if:

- Symptoms get worse or do not improve in 2 weeks, despite treatment.
- New, unexplained symptoms develop.

To schedule an appointment with Sports Medicine, visit [NationwideChildrens.org/SportsMedicineScheduling](https://www.NationwideChildrens.org/SportsMedicineScheduling) or scan this code with your camera phone.

