

What is it?

A common cause of heel pain is Plantar Fasciitis, a degenerative condition caused by excessive strain of the main ligament found underneath the arch of the foot. The role of this ligament is to help support the arch, particularly during "push off" phase when walking or running. Problems can arise when too much strain is placed on the plantar fascia.

Common Causes?

- Poor foot biomechanics (example flat or pronated feet)
- Sudden increase in activity at work or in exercise
- Increase in weight
- An injury, particularly impact injuries like landing from a height

The most common point of pain is usually located directly underneath the heel and often towards the inner arch area.

Pain is usually worse for the first few steps out of bed in the morning or when you stand up after sitting down for a rest. This is due to the "cooling down" and tightening of the injured ligament or a build up of swelling in the injured area.

Swelling also often gets worse towards the end of the day if you have been active on your feet.

Treatment

Decreasing the strain on the plantar fascia is the first aim of treatment. The most effective way of achieving this is through custom orthotics which are made precisely for your feet.

Orthotics are prescription devices designed to support your feet in their ideal position and are usually the most effective method of relieving symptoms in the long term.

It is also helpful to wear comfortable but supportive shoes such as joggers or arch support sandals, rather than hard soled shoes or bare feet. Once the strain has been removed from the plantar fascia it is also important to stretch and strengthen your foot.

Foot mobilisations, plantar fascial splints and Shockwave Therapy can be very effective in managing this condition and your ModPod Podiatrist may use these as adjunct treatments.

It is important to consult your Podiatrist first so as to determine the most effective treatment for you. Generally the earlier the symptoms are treated, the quicker we can get you back on your feet.

Cortisone Injections

Cortisone injections should not be administered without some form of support to the foot. The ligament can be weakened and more damage to the plantar fascia can occur. Foot orthotics are often necessary as an adjunct treatment.

For further information on your foot health or to discuss treatment options with a podiatrist, please contact your local ModPod Podiatry clinic.