

Pain in the Plantar:

50 Ways to Avoid and Deal with Plantar Fasciitis

Plantar fasciitis can have a huge effect on your day-to-day life. This helpful guide from Shoe Insoles gives you 50 top tips for conquering the condition.





Introduction

Plantar Fasciitis is a condition that affects the Plantar Fascia, a tissue that helps to support the arch of your foot. Due to the amount of stress that the foot takes in daily life and, more specifically, the amount of strain that the arch can come under, Plantar Fasciitis is a very common condition.

Plantar Fasciitis can affect people of all different ages and walks of life, however there are some people that are more susceptible than others. One group of people among whom Plantar Fasciitis is common is runners. The amount of stress that running places on the Plantar Fascia causes damage that can be, at times, excruciating.

About Us

Shoe Insoles is a company that is dedicated to combating all of the problems that your feet may face. We specialise in providing a wide range of orthotics designed to focus on your condition and provide you with relief from pain.

To ensure that you get the right pair of insoles for your problem, Shoe Insoles focuses on providing a condition-led approach that matches you with the ideal solution. With a range of trusted manufacturers including [Sof Sole](#), [Formthotics](#) and [Superfeet](#), you can trust that these insoles will provide a real benefit.

Shoe Insoles is based in South West London in the UK and is one of the country's most reliable retailers of orthotics offering a huge range of products.



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Rubbing or massaging the affected area can have a huge effect on the pain that you are feeling in the tissue. Find out how best to target your plantar fascia with our simple tips.

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Your weight has a huge effect on the risk that plantar fasciitis poses for you. Learn more about the best ways to lose weight without damaging your feet.

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Standing for Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation, R.I.C.E is a simple solution to soft tissue injuries including tears in the Plantar Fascia.

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Even though their hobby makes them highly susceptible to Plantar Fasciitis, many runners take no precautions to combat the condition. Find out how to stop plantar fasciitis without stopping running.

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The range of insoles that are available to counteract plantar fasciitis is staggering. Here are five of our best to help you get over your condition.

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Once you've exhausted all of the other options and can think of nowhere else to turn, sometimes medical intervention is the only thing that can help.



Know Your Enemy

Staying informed is the first step on the road to recovery and the more that you know about Plantar Fasciitis, the easier it will be to treat and avoid. With this in mind, you should...

1. Learn About Plantar Fasciitis

How are you supposed to deal with Plantar Fasciitis if you don't even know what it is? For more information on the symptoms of this condition, see our Knowledge Centre [page on the subject](#).

2. Get Diagnosed

If you know what Plantar Fasciitis is but are hoping that the strange twinge in your foot is just a little strain, it may be worth seeing a podiatrist. Podiatrists can accurately diagnose your condition and advise on the best course of action.

3. Assess Your Risk

It is an old adage that says "Prevention is better than the cure" but it is a saying that holds true. If you can identify whether you're at risk from Plantar Fasciitis, you can take steps to prevent it.

4. Don't Make Assumptions

Even if you know about the pain of Plantar Fasciitis you may think: "I don't have to worry, I never have problems with my feet." Unfortunately that's not how Plantar Fasciitis works - it can affect anyone and does not discriminate.

5. Know Yourself

You could be the world's foremost expert on Plantar Fasciitis but if you don't pay attention to the signals that your body is giving, it is all for naught. Know how your feet feel and regularly take stock of the way that they are feeling.

Stop the Causes

We've already talked up the benefits of stopping Plantar Fasciitis before it takes hold of your foot but you may be wondering: how? Well look no further...

6. Measure Your Arches

Incorrectly supported arches are one of the most common causes of Plantar Fasciitis and also one of the most easily remedied. If you don't know what type of arch you have, visit [this page](#) to find out more.

7. Support Your Arches

While you may not think that the arch of your foot would have a massive effect, it is crucial to foot health. Feet that have overly high arches (Pes Cavus) or weak arches are more likely to suffer from Plantar Fasciitis. Specific [arch supports](#) can target the area for greater comfort.

8. Cushion Your Feet

People who have to stand for long periods of time due to their work and people who choose to spend their leisure time running about are at risk from Plantar Fasciitis. If this sounds like you, make sure that you've got the right fit of shoes and perhaps even use an insole to prevent excessive strain.

9. Be Aware of Your Achilles

A tight Achilles tendon is another contributing factor to suffering from Plantar Fasciitis. If you have a history of trouble with your Achilles, it is recommended that you take precautions against developing plantar fasciitis.

10. Lose Weight

As with most conditions that affect the feet, a huge contributing factor can be the amount that you weigh. Naturally the heavier you are, the more pressure is placed on the feet and this can cause a number of problems, including Plantar Fasciitis.

Stretches

While some exercise can damage the plantar fascia, there are also exercises that can help in loosening and relaxing the area of the foot, helping to reduce pain.

11. Stretch the Surrounding Muscles

While it can be difficult to stretch the plantar fascia directly, it is possible to stretch the surrounding muscles to ensure that you've got a good system of support around your arch. This includes...

12. Calf Stretches

Stretch your calves in bed by sitting upright and then bending your toes as back close to yourself as possible. This helps to make your calf more flexible, which in turn prevents some of the tightness that can cause plantar fasciitis.

13. Big Toe Stretch

Sit crossed leg with the affected leg on top. Extend the leg and slowly pull your big toe towards you - hold this for 15 - 30 seconds or until it becomes uncomfortable.

14. Towel Stretch

This stretch is designed to target the arch of the foot directly to prevent pain. Fold a towel lengthwise, sit down on a chair and use the towel to lift your leg until it is horizontal. Hold for approximately 30 seconds and repeat 3 times for best results.

15. Use a Dyna-Band

Dyna-Bands are elasticated bands that are great for helping you stretch with greater efficiency.

If you're not the most flexible person to start off with, a Dyna-Band can make stretching much easier and accessible.

Massaging

Through gently massaging the plantar fascia, you can encourage more blood to enter the tissue and this can aid with recovery and provide relief from discomfort.

16. Get the Blood Pumping

Blood is an integral part of any recovery, especially when it is tissue that has been damaged. There are many ways that you can encourage blood into the Plantar Fascia region such as...

17. Tennis Ball Massages

Though they might not be effective against chronic or acute pain, rolling a tennis ball beneath your foot can help lessen the symptoms of mild plantar fasciitis. Try this exercise first thing in the morning for maximum effect.

18. Pro-Tech Spiky Massage Balls

Ideal for the foot or any other area where you are suffering, Pro-Tech Spiky Massage Balls provide an easy and convenient way to massage yourself. The spiky design ensures that the ball can target deep tissues, providing greater relief than alternatives such as a tennis ball.

19. Ice Bottle Trick

Place a plastic bottle filled with cold water in the freezer at night. In the morning you'll find that you now have the perfect tool to massage your foot. The benefits of ice include numbing any pain and encouraging blood to affected area. Simply place the bottle beneath your foot and roll backwards and forwards.

20. Pediroller Foot Massager

When you're really suffering from plantar fasciitis, you need a product that is designed specifically to counter the condition. The Pediroller Foot Massager is ergonomically designed to work on feet and this gives the most targeted and accurate massage possible.

Lose Weight (The Right Way)

As we've discussed above, people who are overweight are at a greater risk of suffering from plantar fasciitis. This does not mean, however, that the best thing you can do is jump into a crash diet or start training for a marathon. Our tips will help you to lose weight without putting you at risk.

21. Swim

Swimming is one of the best ways for you to lose weight - not only is it a fantastic form of exercise, it also places your body under less strain. While most sports rely on you using your feet, often running and jumping, swimming doesn't place them under this stress.

22. Balanced Diet

Even if you are exercising on a regular basis, it doesn't make much difference if you are not eating properly. Try to cut out as much refined sugar as possible and also cut down on carbohydrates. This doesn't have to mean a massive shift in diet - you'd be surprised at the difference made by a few choice changes.

23. Walk

If you are one of those people that like to drive to the corner shop, even when it's only a five minute walk away, then maybe it is time to reconsider. Even a small amount of exercise per day can help you to look and feel healthier.

24. Running (with Care)

Running is a difficult suggestion for people looking to avoid plantar fasciitis: on one hand it places your feet under a lot of stress but on the other it helps you lose weight and improve your general health. If you run carefully, avoiding large hills, hard surfaces and gently increasing your mileage, then you may find you have the best of both worlds.

25. Pregnancy

Sorry ladies, there's not much that you can do about this one. During pregnancy, your weight increases by roughly 10 - 12.5kg (or 22 - 27lbs.) and this sudden increase in weight adds great stress to your feet. Combat this by using the right insole or taking precautions to protect your feet.

Morning Glory

People who suffer from plantar fasciitis often complain that the pain is more pronounced in the morning. Counteracting this morning discomfort is one of the most important things for providing a better quality of life.

26. Stretch Straight Out of Bed

As you've seen above, there are a number of stretches that can help you to lessen the pain associated with plantar fasciitis. Instead of waiting until you've been on your feet all day, why not stretch first thing in the morning to avoid pain when taking your first steps of the day.

27. Avoid Morning Exercise

Although the pain of plantar fasciitis is usually lessened by a period of exercise, it is advisable that you don't exercise first thing in the morning. Running with pain can force you to place excess pressure on your "good leg", often causing more problems.

28. Take in a Walk

Though spare time in the morning may be a luxury for most people juggling the bustle of work and children, a morning walk can help loosen your plantar fascia. Instead of going to the nearest bus stop, try the one 10 minutes away or park your car a short distance from your house - you'll grumble but your feet will thank you.

29. Wear Slippers

If you've got plantar fasciitis, it is a good idea to ensure you've got the proper cushioning and support at all times. As soon as you wake up, slip on your favourite pair of house shoes and you'll notice the positive effect it has on your feet in the morning.

30. Use a Strassburg Sock

The Strassburg sock is a life saver (or if not a life-saver, at least a foot-saver) holding your foot in a pointed-toe position all night. This helps to relieve the pain that affects you in the morning, meaning that you can leap out of bed without fear.

R.I.C.E

Rice stands for Rest Ice Compression and Elevation and is a great way to deal with soft tissue injuries. If you remember R.I.C.E, your recovery will almost certainly be expedited.

31. Rest

It goes without saying (although you'd be surprised at the number of people that "soldier on") but as soon as you notice symptoms of plantar fasciitis, get some rest! Exercising more through the pain will not make it go away and will actually exacerbate the problem.

32. Ice

Ice is great for the body and, by placing ice on damaged, sore and swollen areas, you will notice an almost instant improvement. Specific ice-packs such as the Dura-Soft Foot and Ankle Ice Pack Wrap allow you to surround your foot in ice, giving better relief than a bag of frozen peas.

33. Compression

For Plantar Fasciitis, you can switch out "compression" for "support" as they both do the same thing. With the right insole (see later for more information), you can provide the support that you need to avoid pain.

34. Elevation

Keeping your foot kept upright, especially during the night, can help massively to prevent the morning pain associated with plantar fasciitis. Night splints can help to ensure that your foot is held in an elevated position during the night.

35. Repeat!

Unfortunately, plantar fasciitis can be a resilient condition that lasts for years without improvement. Although the R.I.C.E system should work to lessen your pain and aid recovery, it is not written in stone. It is important to not get downhearted if you don't improve right away - tomorrow could be the day that you make the breakthrough.



Runners

Although they know that it's not doing their feet any favours, many runners just can't quit. Find out how to avoid suffering from plantar fasciitis (or how to deal with it once you've developed it) if you're a runner.

36. Use the Right Shoes

No matter how much you may love your old pair of beat up running shoes, they're probably not providing you with the support you need. Try to replace your running shoes approximately every 500 miles (800 kilometres). As simple as it sounds, making sure that your shoes fit properly is also of supreme importance.

37. Camber Avoidance

As fun as it may be to run on uneven trails around the Pennines, uneven ground and surfaces that are on a camber should be avoided. The effect of uneven surfaces on your feet is that they are forced to take more pressure and stress in sensitive areas. [This links to...](#)

38. Hill Avoidance

Running up and down hills has much the same effect on your feet as uneven surfaces - more stress in vulnerable areas. The extra pressure on your metatarsals/heel (going up and down hills, respectively) plays havoc with your plantar fascia.

39. Smarter Surfaces

Although the allure of road running is that there is an endless amount of road to explore and it is all absolutely free, the result can be unpleasant. For a more fascia-friendly run, try grass or a shock-absorbent running track.

40. Much Too Much, Much Too Soon

One of the most common mistakes by people who've just taken up running is thinking they can run further than they can. This sudden increase in mileage causes a number of problems including everything from muscle fatigue and sprains to plantar fasciitis.

Insoles

The right pair of insoles can be an unbelievable boon when fighting against plantar fasciitis. At Shoe Insoles, we offer a wide array of insoles for dealing with fascia pain and here are five of our best.

41. Pedag Viva Insoles

Providing you with an inexpensive and effective way to protect your arch, [Pedag Viva Insoles](#) are ideal for use by people that suffer from plantar fasciitis. Made with real leather, Viva insoles have a high level of quality that will last as long as your shoes.

42. Powerstep Pinnacle Orthotic Insoles

Specifically targeting over-pronation (a major cause in the development of plantar fasciitis), Pinnacle Insoles allow you to avoid the condition at its root. Powerstep's insoles are designed with sport in mind, making them ideal for the more active fasciitis sufferer.

43. Formthotics Dual Density Full Length Insoles

Formthotics insoles have been precision designed to fit as closely to your foot as possible. With this in mind, their Dual Density Insoles can be easily modified by a foot-care professional to ensure that you are getting targeted support in key vulnerable areas.

44. Sof Sole Plantar Fasciitis Insoles

Sof Sole's insoles are designed to account for the difference in morphology (shape) of men and women's feet. Many other insoles don't bother with this distinction and as a result, Sof Soles Insoles provide unbeatable support.

45. Powerstep Protech Pro Orthotic Insoles

When you need the best, you get the professionals in. The Pro Orthotic Insoles are known for being great for a number of conditions and ailments, ensuring that your foot gets the treatment that it needs. Protech Pro Insoles feature a unique EVA cushion casing that helps ensure the highest level of comfort.

Medical Options

Plantar fasciitis is a resilient disease - sometimes you can think that you have it beat before it comes right back. In chronic cases where nothing else can be done, there are a range of medical and surgical options available.

46. Err on the Side of Caution

If you think that you might be at risk from plantar fasciitis and you are suffering from foot pain, nothing should stop you from going to see someone. There is no sense in suffering in silence, especially when the alternative is being cured.

47. Visit Your Podiatrist

With any foot pain it is important to know what it is that you're going up against. Something as simple as a visit to your podiatrist can help you to discover your condition and take your first steps to counteract it.

48. Get Medical Advice

While our guide gives a broad selection of tips for combating plantar fasciitis, your podiatrist will be able to give more specific, tailored advice. The best course of action for curing your condition depends on your specific circumstances and these can be more easily judged by a medical professional.

49. Choose a Custom Made Orthotic

While all of the plantar fasciitis insoles that can be purchased from Shoe Insoles are of the highest quality, a custom orthotic can give even better support. By specifically targeting the quirks of your foot, you'll receive much greater comfort and an insole that is more effective.

50. Surgical Options

Roughly 95% of all people suffering from plantar fasciitis are able to recover without undergoing surgery. For even the worst plantar fasciitis pain, most doctors will not recommend surgery within the first 6 months of treatment.

However, if you've tried everything else and nothing has worked, surgery can be performed on the plantar tissue. Plantar Fascia Release includes cutting a little portion of the tissue to release tension on the area and reduce inflammation.



