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Plantar Fasciitis Exercises

9 exercises that gently stretch the arch and calf and strengthen the foot to help ease heel pain and keep it from coming back

Plantar-Fascia

Plantar fasciitis is irritation of the thick band of tissue (the plantar fascia) that runs along the bottom of the foot. It often causes heel pain that is worst with the first steps in the morning or after sitting for a while.

Precautions

- A mild stretching feeling is normal. Stop if you feel sharp pain.
- If the pain gets worse, or your first steps the next morning hurt more, do fewer reps or sets.
- Stretch slowly and hold steady. Don't bounce.
- Hold a wall or chair for exercises done standing (#2, #3, #7).

How often & everyday tips

- Stretches (#1–#3): 2–3 times a day. Do #1 before your first steps in the morning and after sitting a long time.
- Strengthening (#4–#9): once a day, 3–5 days a week.
- Wear supportive, cushioned shoes. Avoid going barefoot or wearing flat sandals on hard floors.
- Build up standing, walking, and running time gradually.



1 Plantar Fascia Stretch

1. Sit and cross the sore foot over the other knee.
2. Hold your toes and gently pull them back toward your shin until you feel a stretch along the arch.
3. Hold, then relax.

Hold 10 sec · 10 reps



2 Calf Stretch (Gastrocnemius)

1. Face a wall with your hands on it. Step one foot forward and the other back.
2. Keep the back knee straight and the back heel on the floor.
3. Lean forward until you feel a stretch in the upper calf of the back leg.

Hold 30 sec · 3 reps each side



3 Deep Calf Stretch (Soleus)

1. Start in the same position as #2.
2. Bend the back knee slightly, keeping the back heel on the floor.
3. Feel the stretch lower in the calf, closer to the heel.

Hold 30 sec · 3 reps each side



4 Arch Lift (Short Foot)

1. Sit or stand with your foot flat on the floor.
2. Without curling your toes, gently draw the ball of the foot toward the heel so the arch lifts.
3. Hold, then relax.

Hold 5 sec · 10 reps



5 Toe Lifts (Toe Yoga)

1. Keep your foot flat on the floor.
2. Lift only your big toe while the other four toes stay on the floor.
3. Lower slowly. It may be hard at first — that's normal.

10 reps



6 Towel Scrunch

1. Sit with your foot on a towel on the floor.
2. Use your toes to grab the towel and pull it in toward your heel, gathering it under your foot.
3. Spread your toes, then repeat.

10–15 reps

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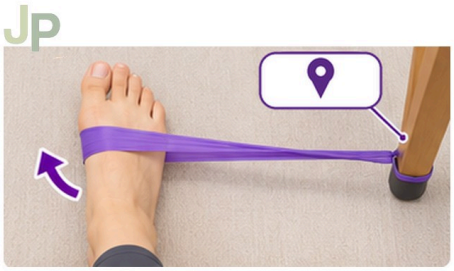
Plantar-Fascia



7 Double Heel Raise

1. Stand and hold the back of a chair.
2. Slowly rise up onto your toes with both feet.
3. Lower your heels slowly (about 3 seconds).

8–12 reps · 2 sets



8 Band Ankle Turn-In (Inversion)

1. Sit with your legs straight out in front of you.
2. Tie a resistance band to a sturdy object on the outside of your foot (such as a chair leg) and loop it around the front of your foot.
3. Slowly turn the sole of your foot inward against the band, then slowly return. Move only the ankle.

10–15 reps · 2 sets



9 Band Ankle Turn-Out (Eversion)

1. Loop the band around your other foot to hold it in place (the anchor), then around the front of the working foot.
2. Slowly turn the working foot outward against the band.
3. Return slowly. Keep your knee still and move only the ankle.

10–15 reps · 2 sets

Get medical care if you notice:

- A sudden pop or tearing feeling in the heel or arch, with bruising or swelling
- You can't put weight on the foot
- Heel pain that started after a fall or injury
- Numbness, tingling, or burning in the foot
- Redness, warmth, and swelling, or a fever
- Pain at night or at rest that keeps getting worse

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These are simple, comfortable exercises for everyday home use, based on materials from respected medical organizations. For exercises tailored to your symptoms, talk with your healthcare provider. This material does not replace an individual medical evaluation.

Sources: JOSPT Heel Pain – Plantar Fasciitis Clinical Practice Guideline (2023); DiGiovanni et al., JBJS 2003; Rathleff et al., Scand J Med Sci Sports 2015; AAOS OrthoInfo – Plantar Fasciitis and Bone Spurs. These organizations have not reviewed or endorsed this material. Illustrations created with AI.