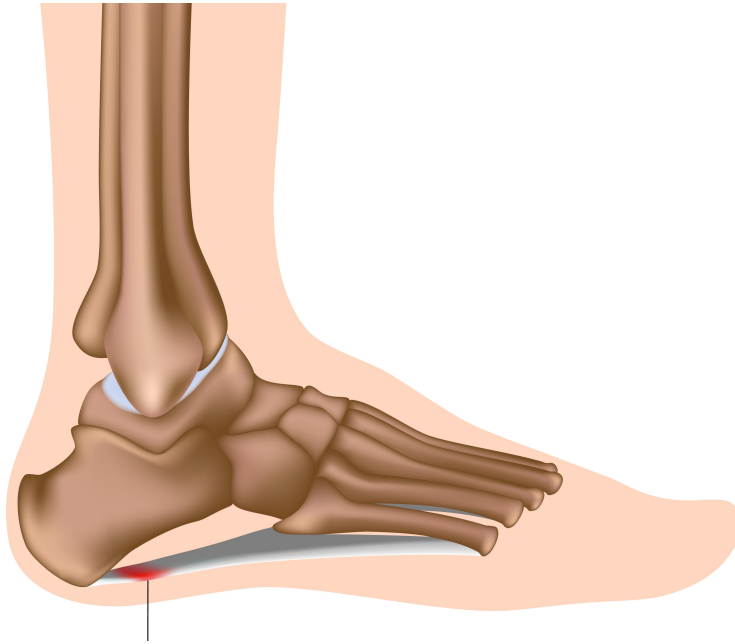


Plantar fasciitis

Plantar fasciitis is a painful condition at the attachment (to your heel bone) of a fibrous sheet of tissue that helps to hold the arch of your foot.



“Plantar” refers to the sole of your foot and *“fascia”* refers to the fibrous tissue that envelops the sole of the foot.

Classically it is painful when you first put your foot to the floor in the morning and may ease up during the day but is made worse by long periods of standing and walking.

In a high percentage of cases the problem goes away by itself but it can take up to 2 years.

Although surgery can be performed for this condition, it is not 100% successful and **there are a number of non operative options** that are worth investigating because although they may help you and they carry a lower risk than surgery.

Non surgical options:

- **Physiotherapists** will use **plantar fascia specific stretching** aimed at stretching the calf muscles and also the plantar fascia itself
- **A night splint** that holds the ankle at 90degrees will keep the calf stretched out at night to prevent that initial pain in the morning.
- **A heel raise** inside the shoe decreases the required length of the calf to allow the foot to be comfortably on the ground.
- **Shock wave therapy** involves pulses of ultrasound that will encourage healing. This procedure is safe but can be painful.
- **Steroid Injection** may relieve your pain but carries a risk of further damage to the plantar fascia
- **Blood Injection (Platelet rich plasma)** aids the healing process.

Surgery is reserved for cases where the non surgical options have failed.

Calf lengthening is performed at the back of the lower leg and addresses primary **“heel cord” tightness**.

Plantar fascia release –

Keyhole type surgery. This may involve one or two small incisions on the side of the sole of the foot near the heel.

Open surgery - May involve a more formal incision that involves the sole of the foot. It allows a more complete release of the painful structures which may involve a nerve known as **“Baxters nerve”**.

Surgery may be performed as **day case or require overnight stay**.

Recovery requires a period of strict elevation and non weight bearing.

Success may not be evident for a few months.