



5 steps for Curing Plantar Fasciitis

Do you have a sharp pain or burning sensation at the bottom of your foot? Is it painful when you wake up first thing in the morning? Is the heel of your foot tender when walking, going up stairs, or standing for a long time?

If so, you may have plantar fasciitis. Sounds fancy, but usually it is relatively easy to address. The name means “inflamed connective tissue at the bottom of your foot”, don’t let it scare you into thinking it is something terribly serious. It does need to be addressed, though, to have a nice active quality of life.

Plantar Fasciitis can be exacerbated by:

- Your feet rolling inward/downward.
- Having high arches or flat feet.
- Walking, standing, or running for long periods of time, especially on hard surfaces.
- Being overweight.
- Wearing shoes that don't fit well or are worn out.
- Having a tight Achilles Tendon and/or calf muscles.
- Wearing high heels.

Step 1: Doctor’s Visit:

See your doctor or physical therapist to make sure you have PF and not something else. This is required, especially if you are having severe pain. Your doctor may prescribe anti-inflammatory medication.

Step 2: Use RICE:

RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation). [Ice your heel](#), arch, and bottom of your foot. Stick a water bottle in the freezer, once frozen, you can use it to easily ice the entire bottom of your foot by placing the bottle on the ground and gently rolling your foot over it. Try icing 10 minutes on, 10 minutes off, and repeat as need.


Step 3: Do Stretching and Exercise for the Foot and Ankle:

Strengthening and stretching the foot and ankle muscles will help support your arch and take some pressure of the bottom of your foot. Always follow these rules:

A) Listen to your body, don't do anything that hurts. With all the following exercises and stretches, you should feel pulling, a slight stretching, or a slight contraction, not pain.

B) Start very slowly, using a light amount of force and slow controlled movements, and then progress very gradual from there. It's best to do each exercise two or three times during the day, but you do not need to do them all at once. Be sure to do them at least 5x's per week.

C) Make sure to do a really good warm-up for your feet and ankles before participating in any sports. Avoid sports that aggravate your PF until your feet get stronger and more flexible.

D) Warm up your feet and ankles before getting out of bed. Many people with plantar fasciitis have intense heel pain in the morning, when taking the first steps after getting out of bed. The plantar fascia gets tight while sleeping. Stretching or massaging the plantar fascia before standing up can often reduce heel pain. Flex your foot up and down 10 times before standing. Use a towel to stretch the bottom of your foot gently ([towel stretch](#) ).

E) When stretching, do so with shoes on first, then progress to barefoot, but maintain your arch during the stretch. Don't let your foot collapse flat.

Stretches:

-[Plantar fascia and calf stretch](#)

-[Calf stretch](#) 

-Soleus Stretching- same as calf stretch, but with the back knee slightly bent.

-Foot Stretching- same as Soleus stretch, but with the back knee more bent and the back foot lifted off the ground, pushing gently into the toes.

-Foot Massage- Use a rolling pin or tennis ball. While seated, very gently roll the ball with the arch of your foot. If you are able to, progress to doing this exercise while you are standing up. You can also use your hand very gently to massage the bottom of the foot.

Exercises:

-Foot Arching Exercise: [Towel curls](#) 📺 or [Marble pickups](#) 📺

-Single leg stance: practice standing on one leg while barefoot.

-Toe Raise Walking: practice walking on your heels to strengthen the front of your shins.

-After exercising, [ice your heel](#), arch and bottom of your foot to help relieve pain and inflammation. You may want to take a pain killer/anti-inflammatory medication. Do not take anything before exercising. You want your body to be sensitive, so it will stop you from doing something that it is too much for your foot with pain and discomfort.

-If you are in a lot of pain, do not exercise, ice your foot and take a pain killer/ anti-inflammatory. There are other exercises you can use to stretch and strengthen your foot and leg. Ask your physical therapist or doctor which exercises will work best for you.

Avoid:

-Any exercises, activities, or positions that hurt.

-Running, jumping, going up stairs, and fast walking on hard surfaces (esp. concrete).

-Walking barefoot (at least until your feet get stronger).

-Physical exertion first thing in the morning.

-Shoes that are too tight, worn out, hurt, change your foot mechanics, or don't have good arch support.

-High heels.

Step 4: Use a soft night splint: Wear a [night splint](#) while you sleep. Night splints hold the ankle and foot in a position that keeps the Achilles tendon and plantar fascia slightly stretched.

- Go to <http://www.thesock.com/> or search online for "night splints".

Step 5: Use Yoga Toes. This product will help strengthen your feet and toes. Wear it until you feel a slight discomfort, then take it off. Each time you put it on, you should be able to

wear it longer and longer, before it gets uncomfortable. Do not try and walk or even stand in them at first. Once you can wear them without even slight discomfort for 10 minutes, you can start flexing your toes in them, and even walking in them; always use your body as a guide and do not do anything painful. Build yourself up slowly.

- <http://www.yogapro.com>

There is no reason to suffer with foot pain from plantar fasciitis, when it can most likely be avoided completely. Show your feet some love, and they will love you back. Get in a good routine, doing the exercises at least 5x's per week and following the rest of the protocol, and you will be back to pain free movement in no time.

