Why Do My Heels Hurt - Plantar Fasciitis Says Leading Sydney CBD and North Shore Sports Podiatrist

Why do my heels hurt - Plantar Fasciitis

If you experience a sharp stabbing pain in your heel, especially first thing in the morning, you may have a condition called plantar fasciitis. Heel pain is one of the most common complaints patients bring to podiatrists. Heel pain to the extent that it disrupts your preparation for the day, is cause for some concern.

Leading Sports Podiatrist and director of Footwork Podiatry in Sydney, Mark Lin, understands this common complaint and possibilities for treatment. "The plantar fascia is a collection of strong connective tissue and ligaments that support the foot arch," says Lin. "Composed of a broad band of collagen fibres, the plantar fascia absorb walking related shock, and any time you are pounding your heels down while you walk, all that shock goes to the plantar fascia."

It seems too much hard walking and not enough cushioning can damage the plantar fascia. Fallen arches and flat feet unbalance the biomechanical system of the feet and can contribute to the development of the condition.

Lin agrees and adds, "Wearing high heels often can lead to development of plantar fasciitis, as this causes the Achilles tendon to tighten." Sorry Jimmy Choo! "The condition is also more prevalent with ageing, as the heels naturally flatten as we grow older, putting tension on the ligament," Lin says.

Why does my heel hurt in the morning? A sore heel in the morning, also known as ‘first-step’ pain, is post static dyskinesia which is pain that’s worse and most noticeable after rest, or after getting out of bed in the morning.

Lin comments, “During the day, the fascia adapts to the impact of daily movement but during sleep, the ligaments and connective tissue of the foot and calf naturally contract. When stretched out again as you take your first morning steps, this can cause a sharp stabbing pain. This is a typical indication of strain on the tendons and fascia”.

Nerve entrapment A nerve entrapment condition called Baxter’s neuritis can also be caused by plantar fasciitis and is often misdiagnosed as plantar fasciitis, as the symptoms overlap.

"Neuritis in the foot is fairly common, as the nerves can easily be damaged when any other part of the foot suffers an injury. In the case of plantar fasciitis and Baxter’s neuritis, small tears in the plantar fascia cause inflammation and thickening of the tissue. This can pinch or trap the Baxter’s nerve, which runs under the plantar fascia," says Lin.

The pain is often described as a shooting pain from the heel to the middle of the foot, and some sufferers are unable to stand on their feet for more than a few minutes. What’s worse is that pain medication may not bring relief.

Heel spurs Chronic inflammation and pulling on the plantar fascia can result in the development of a heel spur. This is a bony growth that develops underneath the heel bone or on the back of it and is also related to tightness in the Achilles tendon. A heel spur can become very painful, especially when it rubs on the Baxter’s nerve.

Treatment for heel pain Heel pain treatment is focussed on reducing pressure on the heel and alleviating the stress in the soft tissue of the foot. Footwork Podiatry offer various non-invasive treatments to alleviate heel pain, with Foot Mobilisation Therapy and Trigenics® being principal among these.

Foot Mobilisation Techniques (FMT) is a hands-on therapeutic method used to treat musculoskeletal conditions of the foot and leg.

Lin says, "FMT improves joint mobility by breaking up connective tissue adhesions and restrictions around the joints. Freeing up these restrictions and relieving stiffness improves the position of the joints to naturally restore optimal biomechanics."

What is Trigenics? On the other hand, TRIGENICS® is a neurological muscle assessment, treatment and training system which reprograms the way the brain communicates with the body. Mark Lin is the first Podiatrist in Australia to be trained and specialised in this unique neuro-muscular treatment system.

Says Lin, “When a joint, tendon, muscle or ligament suffers damage, stress or injury, their nerve sensors send improper or false signals which confuse the brain. The brain responds by sending false controlling signals to the muscles and tendons. These muscles then become neurologically tight or weak, causing dysfunctional joint movement through a process known as neurological inhibition. If left untreated, this leads to weak links and abnormal muscle pull patterns, resulting in chronic pain, re-injury and deterioration”.

Footwork Podiatry employ a multi-modal treatment system, combining Trigenics® with a number of other treatment techniques for a cumulative therapeutic effect and enhanced treatment outcome,

Radial Shockwave therapy is another cutting-edge technology. This technique uses high-intensity sound wave treatment to break down scar tissue or adhesions and stimulate tissue repair. The sound waves penetrate up to 4cm deep and create therapeutic cavitation bubbles and microscopic biological effects within the tissue, activating the body’s natural healing mechanisms.

Shockwave therapy has proven to be effective where around 80% of patients report a substantial improvement of their condition after only three treatment sessions.

Contact Footwork Podiatry to find out how Foot Mobilisation Therapy and Trigenics® can assist with your heel pain. They can help reduce reliance on medication for pain relief for chronic conditions and they will perform a measurable and functional assessment to determine whether you are at risks of other pain and injuries. Their evidence-based assessment system allows them to collect meaningful data that convert to an accurate treatment plan. Footwork Podiatry are situated in Roseville on Sydney's North Shore and Sydney CBD.

For further information, visit the Sports and Podiatrist Clinic to book online, or call Mark Lin or Wei Lee and their friendly team on +61 2 9416 7889.

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Contacts

Stephanie Potter
+61730403018
mailto: media@baxton.me