

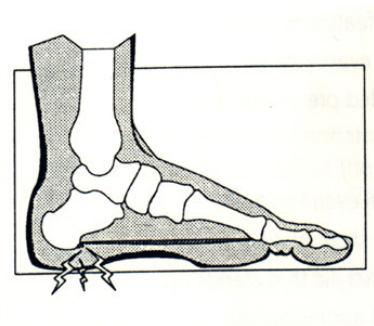
Heel Pain

Plantar Fasciitis

CAUSES

Causes of possible heel conditions:

- Poor foot mechanics
- Being overweight
- Low activity levels
- Improper footwear
- Aging
- Unfavourable ground conditions



COMMON HEEL CONDITIONS

Plantar Fasciitis

One of the most common heel problems seen by Canadian Certified Pedorthists, plantar fasciitis is the inflammation and irritation of the plantar fascia (a thick fibrous tissue that extends from the heel to the toes and supports the arch). Poor foot posture or excessive ankle motion during walking can strain the plantar fascia resulting in small tears and increased tension where the fascia attaches to the calcaneus (heel).

Symptoms:

- Pain and swelling (inflammation) at the beginning of the arch or bottom of the heel
- Often the pain is worse with the first few steps when getting out of bed or after sitting

Calcaneal Stress Fracture

Calcaneal stress fracture of the heel is usually a result of some sort of trauma but can also result from increased activity done improperly.

Symptoms:

- Total avoidance of weight-bearing will be seen in an individual with a stress fracture of the calcaneus (heel).

Retrocalcaneal Bursitis (Achilles bursitis)

Retrocalcaneal bursitis is the inflammation of the bursa (balloon-like lubricating sack) that lies between the Achilles tendon and the back of the heel bone (calcaneus).

Symptoms:

- Tenderness is found at the back of the heel just above where the Achilles tendon attaches
- Swelling of the bursa produces symmetric widening of the heel where the Achilles tendon attaches to the calcaneus (heel)
- Pain increases with passive dorsiflexion (bending the foot towards the front of the leg) of the ankle or with standing on toes

Achilles Tendonopathy

Achilles tendonopathy is an injury to the Achilles tendon just above the heel on the back of the leg. This condition may be due to abnormal or excessive strain on the tendon from poor shock absorption or excessive foot pronation.

Symptoms:

- Pain, swelling, and possible nodule formation along the Achilles tendon or where it is attached to the back of the calcaneus (heel)
- Stiffness may be present after sitting or resting

PEDORTHIC TREATMENT MAY INCLUDE:

- Custom-made foot orthotic or over-the-counter device
- Recommendation of appropriate and proper-fitting footwear
- Modification of footwear