

PLANTAR FASCIITIS AND OTHER INFLAMMATORY CONDITIONS OF THE FEET

Most of the tendons from the muscles in the lower leg insert somewhere in the foot allowing the foot to move.

As we get older and our muscles and tendons do not stretch as well as they should, injury can occur. This is especially so with sudden movement or when we have been sitting or lying in bed and suddenly stand and stretch them from a contraction phase. This sudden stretching movement can tear muscle and tendon fibres and pull the tendon away from its insertion in the bone. This injury sets up an inflammatory reaction and each time we stretch them suddenly the same area is re-injured. To help repair the injury we must break this cycle.

A way to repair the injured area is to stretch the muscles and tendons in the lower leg before we stand up and weight bear. To do this, please follow the following exercises.

- 1. Every morning before you get out of bed, and lying on your back, do about 10 ankle rotations, clockwise and anticlockwise. Also, about 10 backwards and forwards motion at the ankle joint, i.e., point the toes to the ceiling and then point them to the end of the bed. You will feel the stretch in the muscles of the lower leg. Now you may get out of bed ©
- 2. After your morning shower when your muscles are still warm from the hot water, do a squatting exercise with your feet placed flat on the floor. To be able to do this you will have to hang on to something or you will fall over backwards. Hang on to a bed, sink, etc. pull back on your outstretched arms in the squatting position and hold it for about 30 seconds. You will feel your whole-body stretch.
- 3. Every day, if you sit down on a chair for longer than 10 minutes you will have to do a couple of the ankle exercises before you stand up and weight bear. If you don't do this, you will re-injure the area.

It may take about 3 weeks before you will feel the benefit of these exercises and you will probably have to do them for the rest of your life. They don't take long to do each morning.

After initial improvement in your condition, you may feel your feet become quite painful again at times despite continuing the exercises. Don't worry about this, just keep persevering and your feet will improve again and be better than before. It may take 3 to 4 months to get to the stage of total remission of symptoms and become totally pain free.



