

Plantar Fasciitis



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Small tears

Overview

Plantar fasciitis is an irritation of the plantar fascia. This thick band of connective tissue travels across the bottom of the foot between the toes and the heel. It supports the foot's natural arch. It stretches and becomes taut whenever the foot bears weight.

Causes

Plantar fasciitis is caused by repetitive stress or excessive tension on the plantar fascia. Small tears can develop in this tissue. It can become irritated and inflamed.

Symptoms

The pain of plantar fasciitis feels like a stabbing sensation in the heel of the foot. This pain usually develops gradually. It is typically worst in the morning, when a person takes the first few steps out of bed. Plantar fasciitis may affect one foot, or it may be felt in both feet.

Treatment

Treatment for plantar fasciitis may include rest, ice and anti-inflammatory or corticosteroid medications. A physician may also recommend orthotics, splints or physical therapy. If these techniques are not effective, surgery may be needed to relieve tension on the plantar fascia.