

Heel Pain

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Heel pain is a common condition in which weight bearing on the heel causes extreme discomfort.

There are two categories of heel pain, the first of which is caused by overuse or repetitive stress. This stress is caused when there's too much impact on a specific area of your foot. Often referred to as "heel pain syndrome", this condition can be caused from shoes with heels that are too low, a thinned-out fat pad in the heel area, or from a sudden increase in activity. The second form of heel pain, known as plantar fasciitis or a heel spur, is usually caused from a biomechanical problem, such as flat feet. The plantar fascia is a broad band of fibrous tissue that runs along the bottom of your foot from the heel through the midfoot and into the forefoot. Flat feet can cause the plantar fascia to be excessively stretched and inflamed, resulting in pain in the heel and arch areas of the foot.

To properly treat heel pain, you must stretch your calf and foot. Also, you should wear shoes that absorb shock, provide cushioning, and elevate the heel to transfer pressure. You can achieve this by using a heel cup, visco heel cradle, or an orthotic designed with materials that will absorb shock and shear forces. Orthotics are corrective devices placed inside your shoe to realign the bones of your foot, ankle, knee, and back. Choosing the proper footwear is also important when treating heel pain. You may want to wear shoes with a firm heel counter, good arch support, and appropriate heel height. If these treatments don't bring pain relief, then surgery may be required.