WELCOA
HEALTH BULLETINS

DAY IN DAY OUT
WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE

FAILING FEET?

Home Remedies for a Common Culprit

We demand a lot out of our feet. To be sure, every day we ask them to take us wherever we need to go. You may not think about your feet much, but if they start to hurt, you're quickly reminded how much you rely on your feet from the moment you get up until it's time to sleep.

A COMMON FOOT CONDITION

If your first steps out of bed are extremely painful, you may have plantar fasciitis (fashee-EYE-tiss). Plantar fasciitis happens when the ligament that supports your arch is repeatedly strained, causing tiny tears. These ligament tears can lead to pain and swelling in the heel and sole of your foot.

COMMON CAUSES

You can develop or be more prone to plantar fasciitis condition if you:

- Are overweight
- Are on your feet all day or do a lot of walking (for your job for example)
- Walk or run a lot, but always seem to have tight calf muscles (you find it difficult to touch your toes or have limited motion in your ankles)
- Have very flat feet or very high arches
- Wear shoes that don't fit well or are unsupportive (i.e., flip flops, canvas shoes)

TREATMENT

Plantar fasciitis can usually be treated with self-care. Although no single approach works best for everyone with the condition, here are some common self-care treatments that have proven effective:

Try new activities that don't place stress on your feet or simply give your feet a rest. If you run every

day and it's aggravating your feet, try cutting back or switching to something like cycling or swimming until your feet feel better.

Use ice therapy. Apply ice to the sore area for 20 minutes three or four times a day to relieve your symptoms.

Do stretches that target your toes, Achilles tendon and calves. Stretches can help soothe your symptoms and they can also prevent reoccurrence (see below for a few helpful stretches).

DID YOU KNOW?

Each foot contains 26 bones, which form two arches.

Invest in a pair of supportive shoes. Look for shoes with good arch support and a cushioned sole—ask the salesperson to measure your foot and seek their recommendations. It may be helpful to put your shoes on right when you get up to help give your feet the support they need.

If self-care treatments are not easing your pain after a few weeks, you may want to see your doctor. He/she may prescribe an anti-inflammatory medication, a splint or boot for you to wear at night and/or shots of medicine (such as a steroid) in your heel.

TWO TOP STRETCHES FOR YOUR FEET

Wall Lean

1. Lean forward against a wall with one knee straight and heel on the ground. Your other knee is bent.
2. Your heel and foot arch should stretch as you lean (it's important to keep the knee fully extended on the side being stretched). Hold for 10 seconds, relax and straighten up.
3. Repeat 10+ times on each side.

Toe Stretch

1. Sit in a chair, and extend your affected leg so that your heel is on the floor.
2. Reach down and pull your big toe up and back with your hand. Then pull your toe toward your ankle and away from the floor.
3. Hold the position for at least 15 to 30 seconds.
4. Repeat 2 to 4 times a session, several times a day.