

## **Plantar Fasciopathy**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**01      Is my heel pain due to a bone spur and do I need to remove it?**

Bone spurs are not a typical cause of heel pain. In the case of plantar fasciopathy, heel pain is usually a result of overuse of the plantar fascia itself. As such, treatment of plantar fasciopathy pain can often be carried out without removing the spur.

**02      Do I need surgery for my heel pain?**

If the heel pain you are experiencing is due to plantar fasciopathy as determined by your doctor or therapist, you are unlikely to require surgery. A mixture of conservative treatment modalities can be used to manage the pain and condition.

**03      Is there any food I need to avoid to help with my heel pain?**

Heel pain from plantar fasciopathy is due to mechanical overuse and is not attributed to your diet. Hence there is no need to avoid any type of food.

**04      Will weight loss help with my heel pain?**

Yes, weight loss can potentially reduce heel pain, especially if you have recently put on weight. When you reduce your body weight, your plantar fascia is subjected to less load with each step you take. This in turn reduces the strain on your plantar fascia and the amount of pain you will experience.

**05      How do I fix it?**

A variety of risk factors can lead to the development of plantar fasciitis. We recommend that you see a podiatrist to help you to identify the risk factors and provide you with a holistic management plan.

**06      I have flat feet, is that a bad thing?**

Feet differ in shapes and sizes, and there is no perfect foot posture. In individuals with flat feet, the arch of the foot is closer to the ground. This posture may result in more stress upon the tissues (i.e. muscles, tendons, ligaments) that are located beneath the foot such as the plantar fascia, during weight-bearing activities. The increased stress on the plantar fascia may predispose one to developing heel pain.

**07      How long will it take to get better?**

This is dependent on the effectiveness of the management plan in reducing the load placed on the plantar fascia, and varies from person to person. This is best achieved by having a proper understanding of the condition, as well as adopting a holistic management approach by modifying risk factors to decrease the load on the plantar fascia.

**08      Will I have to wear an orthotic device for life?**

This will depend on your foot function, pain experienced, as well as type and history of injury. Your podiatrist can advise you on this. If you have plantar fasciopathy, orthoses are a form of intervention that helps to reduce loading on the plantar fascia. Simultaneously, other strategies such as activity modification or rehabilitation are also encouraged to further reduce tissue stresses and increase the capacity of your plantar fascia to withstand greater loads, respectively.

**09      Why do I experience pain first thing in the morning?**

Your body is completely at rest and the arch of the foot tends to be in a shortened position when you are asleep in bed at night. When you take your first step in the morning, the fibres that make up the plantar fascia immediately stretch from their shortened and tightened position, thus resulting in micro-tearing and pain.

**If you have any further questions regarding your heel pain, kindly seek advice from your podiatrist.**