

# SOLE PAIN

Because we are on our feet a good deal of the time, can become very troublesome and debilitating; it is best to address the problem as soon as possible.



**A**s outlined in a previous article, our feet are two of our most important load bearing assets. And because of their complex structure – 26 bones along with layers of ligaments, fascia and muscle – they are prone to potential injury. One of the most common conditions that can develop in the foot is Plantar Fasciitis.

## The Condition

Plantar Fasciitis is an inflammation of the plantar (sole) fascia (connective tissue) and its surrounding structures. It is also possible to develop a heel spur (calcium deposit) with chronic stress on the origin of the fascia at the calcaneus (heel bone). The condition can occur with excessive overloading (lifting heavy objects); but most often it is the result of overuse of the foot in a pronated (flattened) position. A person with a high arch (Pes Cavus) can be even more susceptible because of increased load on the plantar fascia of the long arch.

Plantar Fasciitis is a common cause of heel pain. It occurs equally in both males and females over the age of forty, and people active in sports. Those who are involved in prolonged standing, walking or running activities are more susceptible. Pain is worse with activity, may be present at night, and is often present when first getting out of bed in the morning. It tends to be relieved by rest.

## Location and Adaptation

Pain typically localizes at the plantar fascia attachment just in front of the heel (calcaneus) in the midline of the foot. Chronic partial tears of the fascia will also leave abundant scar tissue

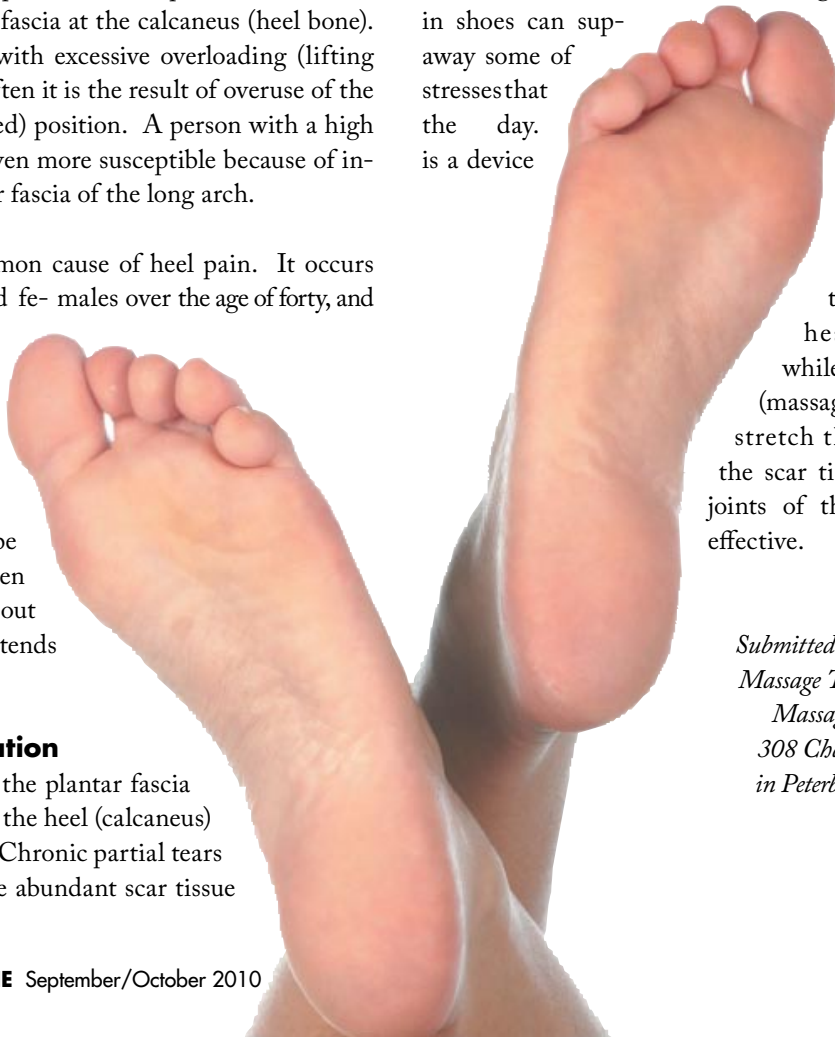
that can be felt at this point. Pain may also present as a burning sensation over the arch of the foot. Abductor Pollicis, a small muscle that moves the big toe away from the foot and attaches at the calcaneus, is often involved and painful.

Pain can be elicited by dorsiflexing (pointing your toe to your nose) the foot and stretching the plantar fascia. Typically with this pain people will alter the way they walk, trying to stop the foot from pronating (flattening the arch and stretching the fascia) by walking on the outside of the foot and holding the foot in a supinated (not flattened) position. Plantar Fasciitis pain, because we are on our feet a good deal of the time, can become very troublesome and debilitating; it is best to address the problem as soon as possible.

## Solutions

Orthotic inserts, with in shoes can support some of the stresses that the day is a device

good shock absorbency, support the arch and take the weight bearing occur throughout The Strausberg Sock that dorsiflexes the foot during sleep, thus stretching the fascia and allowing tissue length and health to be restored while at rest. Soft tissue (massage) techniques that stretch the fascia, breakdown the scar tissue and mobilize the joints of the foot are also very effective.



*Submitted by Jim Smyth, Registered Massage Therapist, Synergystix Inc. Massage and Fitness - located at 308 Charlotte Street (at Rubidge) in Peterborough. Call 742-8244 for more information.*