

HEEL PAIN

OUR FIVE TOP TIPS



FIVE TOP TIPS FOR RELIEVING HEEL PAIN

If you're trying to keep up your walking or your exercise program, but you're being plagued with heel pain, these tips are for you.

We have produced this guide to try to give you some quick, immediate things to do to ease your heel pain.

The number one reason that people come to see us is heel pain. We often see people who've been in pain for six months or more and felt like giving up, thinking that they were going to be in pain for life.

Our message is don't give in. With care and attention, most people recover from heel pain. And it's through treatments such as rehab exercises, mobilising stuck joints, dry needling and orthotics – not surgery.

Heel pain is one of those strange conditions – once you feel it, you know what we mean. It suddenly makes you very conscious of your feet. It makes you rethink what you can do each day. And for many people, it's the first time they get the feeling that they're getting older.

ONE – MIX IT UP!



Change up your exercise. If you've been walking on concrete or tarmac, try walking on an oval, grassy paths or even dirt paths and sand. Repetition is the killer, so different surfaces will really help.

And swap between different pairs of shoes – your shoes could be part of the problem.

Stay on your feet but change the things you do. If you've only been walking outdoors, try using a cross trainer at the gym or log onto YouTube to find a beginner Zumba or yoga class!

Photo by Damir Spanic on Unsplash.

TWO – MASSAGE YOUR OWN FEET

Our simple tennis ball exercise could help. This exercise relieves the tension in the ligaments and muscles in the soles of your feet. And it can take the sting out of your sore feet.

It helps maintain flexibility in the soles of your feet. It gets the blood flowing again – which helps to repair your sore feet.

To do the exercise, sit on a chair with the tennis ball under your toes. Roll the ball under your arch from your toes to your heel. Add as much pressure as you can bear, but don't hurt yourself! To finish up,

roll the ball in small circles under your forefoot, the arch of your foot and then your heel.

To start with, roll the ball for one or two minutes at a time, repeating this exercise three times a day. Build up to as many times a day as possible. One way of building a habit is to attach this new exercise to something else you do each day. You could use your tennis ball while you're catching up with emails or watching TV.



THREE – A SIMPLE CALF STRETCH



This exercise will stretch your calf muscles and relieve tension in your heel and under your foot.

Stand in front of a wall, put your hands on the wall about shoulder height and extend one foot straight backwards.

Bend your front leg until you feel a stretch in the calf of your back leg and hold. Count to 15 and then swap legs.

Make sure you keep your back leg straight and your heel on the ground.

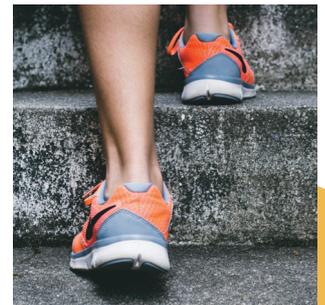
FOUR – GOOD-QUALITY SHOES

See a professional to have your next pair of shoes fitted. Wearing strong, supportive shoes helps reduce the load on the tissues in your feet.

Think about why you're wanting this pair of shoes – you may need a pair of shoes for walking, or you may be wanting to combine running with going to the gym. Let them know you're in pain.

And if you have high arches, for example, ask them about different ways to tie your shoes to make your feet even more comfortable. Podiatrists know these tricks too.

Photo by Bruno Nascimento on Unsplash.



FIVE – HEEL RAISES



What is the reason for this exercise? The muscles in your legs help support your feet. Strengthening them will reduce the load on your poor overloaded feet.

This exercise is best if you're standing on a step. Make sure you hold on to something for balance.

Stand with the balls of your feet on the step. Drop your feet down until you feel a stretch through the arch of your feet. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds and repeat several times.

WHAT CAUSES HEEL PAIN?

A surprising number of conditions cause heel pain including plantar fasciitis, the fatty pads of your feet wearing away and heel spurs. It can also be caused by things you wouldn't link with heel pain such as a trapped nerve in your hip.

With this many potential causes of heel pain, it's important to start with an accurate diagnosis – to see why you're in pain.

THE MOST COMMON REASONS FOR HEEL PAIN ARE:

- suddenly increasing physical activity
- obesity or pregnancy
- badly-made shoes
- feet that roll inwards or outwards
- tight calf muscles
- ankles with a restricted range of motion
- weak core, leg and foot muscles
- your walking style, such as heavy heel striking
- increasing age, and
- a difference in the length of your legs.

However, heel pain can happen to anyone, regardless of how fit you are, your gender or even your body type.

EVERYONE FEELS HEEL PAIN IN DIFFERENT WAYS.

You may feel a stabbing pain in the bottom of your foot or at the back of your heel.

Your pain may be worse in the morning after you first wake up, or after long periods of standing or sitting. The pain can also get worse after exercise and even reach the stage where you're in pain all the time.

The time you take to recover depends on many things, including how long your heel has been inflamed and how active you are.

The pain can be so severe that you think surgery is the only option, but our experience has shown that most heel pain can be successfully resolved with our treatment plan using more conservative measures.

Call us on **62933300** for more information or visit **www.capitalpodiatry.com.au**