

Plantar Fasciitis Rehabilitation Exercises

Plantar Fascia Stretch

Hold your toes on the affected side and stretch them toward your shin bone. You should feel a stretching sensation across the plantar fascia (the bottom of your foot). The stretch should be a mild, but no more than moderate, discomfort. Perform the stretch frequently throughout the day, especially upon waking in the morning and before standing up. Stretch after prolonged sitting. This stretch is more effective with your shoes off.

Hold for 30 seconds, and 3 repetitions per side.



Plantar Fascia Mobilization using a Ball

Use a tennis, lacrosse, or golf ball to mobilize the plantar fascia. This is likely to be painful. The amount of pressure should not exceed a mild to moderate amount of pain. Roll the ball back and forth on the bottom of your foot. Go slowly and spend extra time on the more painful areas, but be sure to mobilize the entire foot.

Perform for 2-3 minutes per foot.



Plantar Fascia Mobilization with Ice

Using a frozen water bottle, roll the bottle back and forth along the bottom of your foot. You may want to wear socks. Go slowly and spend extra time on the more painful areas, but be sure to mobilize the entire foot. *(I don't recommend performing this exercise if you're diabetic or have impaired sensation in your feet.)*

Perform for 2-3 minutes per foot.



Foot Intrinsic Muscle Strengthening

Lay a small towel flat on the floor. A slick non-carpeted floor tends to work best. Try to grab and crinkle the towel by using your toes. Be sure to extend the toes and grab as much as the towel as possible before attempting to grab it again.

Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions on each foot once per day.



Foot and Ankle Stretch with a Strap

Place a strap (or belt) around the bottom of your foot. Pull your toes, foot, and ankle upward toward your shin until you feel a stretch in the bottom of your foot and/or your calf muscles. This stretch is best performed barefoot, but it can be performed with shoes on.

Perform 1-2 minutes on each leg, 2 or 3 times a day.



Calf Stretch – Gastrocnemius

While standing and leaning against a wall or counter, place one foot back behind you and bend the front knee until a gentle stretch is felt on the back of the lower leg. Maintain a good upright posture.

Your back knee should be straight the entire time, with your heel on the ground.

Hold for 30 seconds, and 3 repetitions per side.

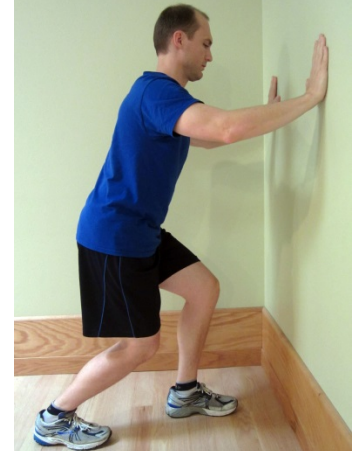


Calf Stretch – Soleus

While standing and leaning against a wall or counter, place one foot back behind you and bend the front knee until a gentle stretch is felt on the back of the lower leg. Maintain a good upright posture.

Your back knee should be bent the entire time, with your heel on the ground.

Hold for 30 seconds, and 3 repetitions per side.



Balancing on One Foot

While standing near a counter top, stand on one foot. Use your hands on the counter top as needed to maintain your balance. Maintain a good upright posture. The softer the surface you stand on, the more difficult the balance will be.

Hold for 30 seconds, and 3 repetitions per side.



Heel Raises

While standing near a counter top, raise up on your toes as you lift your heels off the ground. Maintain a good upright posture.

For normal strength, you should be able to perform 25 repetitions on one foot while using a counter top for minor balance only. As you work on ankle and plantar flexion strength, start slowly as to not aggravate the plantar fascia. Discontinue this exercise if your pain worsens.

Initially, perform with both feet. 10 repetitions at a time, up to 3 sets of 10 repetitions, once per day. As your pain level decreases and your strength increases, progress to one foot only.

