

PLANTAR FASCIITIS PROTOCOL

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Goal: Reduce pain – Improve flexibility – Restore function – Prevent recurrence

1) PHASE 1: PAIN CONTROL & EARLY MOBILITY (0-2 WEEKS)

TIME FRAME	GOALS	INTERVENTIONS	DOSAGE / PARAMETERS	PRECAUTIONS
 0-2 WEEKS	- Reduce heel pain - Calm irritation - Maintain gentle mobility - Begin load tolerance	1. PLANTAR FASCIA STRETCH 	 Gentle stretches: hold 20–30 sec, 3–5 reps, 2–3x/day  Foot rolling: 1–2 min, 2–3x/day  Toe curls: 10–15 reps, 2–3x/day  Pain should stay mild and tolerable	 Avoid excessive barefoot walking  Avoid high-impact activity  Avoid pushing through sharp pain
		2. CALF STRETCH (WALL) 		
		3. FOOT ROLLING (BALL OR BOTTLE) 		
		4. TOE CURLS / TOWEL SCRUNCHES 		

2) PHASE 2: FLEXIBILITY & FOOT STRENGTH (2-6 WEEKS)

TIME FRAME	GOALS	INTERVENTIONS	DOSAGE / PARAMETERS	PRECAUTIONS
 2-6 WEEKS	- Improve calf and plantar fascia flexibility - Strengthen intrinsic foot muscles - Improve arch support - Progress load gradually	1. ECCENTRIC CALF LOWERING 	 2–3 sets of 10–15 reps  1–2x/day  Stretches continue daily  Mild discomfort is acceptable	 Progress gradually  Monitor morning pain  Reduce load if symptoms flare
		2. SHORT FOOT / ARCH DOMING 		
		3. MARBLE PICK-UPS 		
		4. HEEL RAISES (DOUBLE-LEG OR SEATED CALF RAISE) 		

KEY PRINCIPLES



SUPPORTIVE FOOTWEAR

Wear shoes with good cushioning and arch support.



BE CONSISTENT WITH EXERCISES

Daily effort leads to lasting improvement.



GRADUAL PROGRESSION

Increase load and difficulty over time as tolerated.



MONITOR PAIN RESPONSE

Mild soreness is okay. Stop or modify if pain increases.

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3) PHASE 3: STRENGTH, BALANCE & FUNCTION (6–12 WEEKS)

TIME FRAME	GOALS	INTERVENTIONS	DOSAGE / PARAMETERS	PRECAUTIONS
 6–12 WEEKS	• Improve load tolerance • Build single-leg strength • Improve balance • Restore gait / function	1. SINGLE-LEG CALF RAISES 	 2–3 sets of 8–15 reps	 Avoid sudden overload  Reduce volume if symptoms flare  Maintain good technique
		2. STEP-UPS / STEP-DOWNS 	 3–4x/week	
		3. SINGLE-LEG BALANCE 	 Balance 30–45 sec each side	
		4. RESISTED ANKLE STRENGTHENING 	 Walking progression as tolerated	

4) PHASE 4: RETURN TO ACTIVITY & MAINTENANCE (12+ WEEKS)

TIME FRAME	GOALS	INTERVENTIONS	DOSAGE / PARAMETERS	PRECAUTIONS
 12+ WEEKS	• Return to walking / running / activity • Maintain strength and flexibility • Prevent recurrence	1. HOPPING DRILLS (IF APPROPRIATE) 	 2–4 sets as tolerated	 Gradual return to impact  Stop if heel pain sharply increases  Ensure adequate recovery
		2. DYNAMIC CALF STRENGTHENING 	 3–4x/week	
		3. FUNCTIONAL DRILLS / LATERAL MOVEMENT 	 Stretching daily	
		4. ONGOING PLANTAR FASCIA & CALF STRETCHING 	 Progress activity gradually	



CRITERIA TO PROGRESS

- ✓ Reduced morning pain/stiffness
- ✓ Improved walking tolerance
- ✓ Better calf/foot strength
- ✓ Improved balance/control



RED FLAGS / REVIEW

- Severe persistent pain
- Numbness/tingling
- Inability to bear weight
- Symptoms not improving
- Suspicion of other causes (such as stress fracture or nerve entrapment)

PLANTAR FASCIA ANATOMY



CLINICAL PEARL

Load management + supportive footwear + gradual progression are essential.



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