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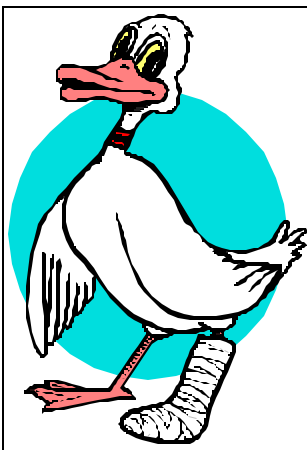
VOL. 1

SUMMER

Keeping you informed, up-to-date and connected.

Inside this issue:

Plantar Fasciitis	1
Chronic Pain	2
Words to Ponder	3
Mini Vacations	4
Be A Star...	4



The primary symptom of plantar fasciitis is a persistent, sharp pain or burning sensation in the center or inner side of the heel.

Realistically, pain can be experienced anywhere along the length of the plantar fascia including the heel, arch or ball of the foot.

Plantar Fasciitis: Burning, Painful Heels And Arches

By Michael Humphreys, NCTMB, PTA

Summer weather signals the shift to outdoor activities that demand more time on our feet like gardening, walking, hiking, and summer sports.

Even vacations can include sightseeing or standing in long lines. If there's one thing guaranteed to take the fun out of summer activities, it's achy, burning heels and feet.

The two most common causes of this kind of heel pain are bone spurs and plantar fasciitis. Both can be linked together. Let's discuss Plantar fasciitis first. This is an inflammation of the thick ligamentous band on the bottom of the foot called the plantar fascia.

Fascia is an elastic membrane that surrounds part or all of the muscles in the body. In this case, the plantar fascia is tougher and much less flexible than fascia found in other parts of the body.

This band of connective tissue runs from the heel bone, through the arch of the foot, to the ball of the foot.

The plantar fascia supports the longitudinal arch of the foot, keeping the bones of the foot properly aligned. The body's weight is balanced evenly over the arch, to prevent excess pressure in any one area.

When we stand, the weight of the body is placed on the feet and the plantar fascia is stretched. The plantar fascia

has very little "give" and pulls slightly at its heel attachment when it's stretched.

When the foot is misaligned, the "pull" is much stronger, and can over-stretch or even tear the plantar fascia. This misalignment can be due to the foot being pronated (rolled towards the inside of the foot) or supinated, (rolled towards the outside of the foot). Both conditions can happen from the body's weight being improperly distributed.

As weight is transferred from the heel to the rest of the foot, the pull on the plantar fascia is increased. This pulling irritates the fascia at the heel attachment, creating pain and swelling.

The primary symptom is a persistent, sharp pain or burning sensation in the center or inner side of the heel.

Plantar Fasciitis can be experienced anywhere along the length of the plantar fascia, the heel, arch or ball of the foot. Pain can start as dull and intermittent, but left untreated, will become sharper and more persistent, until it increases to the point of being almost unbearable.

Typically the pain will be worse after a long period of rest, such as when you first stand on your feet in the morning, and gradually will seem to improve after a few minutes of moving around.

Long periods of standing or walking will cause the pain to recur, due to the stress and inflammation of the plantar fascia at the heel attachment.

Continued on page 2

Plantar Fasciitis... *continued from page 1*

If any of the nerves in the arch of the foot become irritated from the inflamed plantar fascia, the pain can travel into the arch or even the ankle.

The body's natural response is to fill these tears with bone tissue. As this bone tissue continues to increase, it becomes a large mass, also known as a heel spur. As anyone who has had a heel spur can tell you, heel spurs are extremely painful and may even require surgery to remove the spur.

Here Are 7 Common Causes of Plantar Fasciitis:

1. Flat feet, or rigid feet with a very high arch
2. Shoes that offer poor support
3. Running on hills, uneven surfaces, or the balls of your feet
4. Large weight gain in a short period of time
5. Increased daily activity on one's feet
6. Decreased flexibility due to aging
7. Biomechanical abnormalities of the feet

How Is Plantar Fasciitis Treated?

Managing Chronic Pain with Massage

by Michael Humphreys, NCTMB, PTA

Many people have discovered that they were able to achieve varying degrees of pain relief with massage therapy. For some folks, it is the first time they have had a decrease in pain after years of suffering. The decrease in pain is dependent on a number of factors, including the originating cause.

Many chronic pain clients find they can be relatively pain free for hours or even days after a massage session.

According to the International Association for the Study of Pain, pain is a language of expression used by the body to communicate a psychological experience of discomfort.

It may be related to tissue damage and pain stimuli or may even exist in the absence of obvious physical or pathophysiological causes!

When an injury occurs, there is an increased sensitivity or "hyperesthesia" which spreads along the various nerve pathways of the body.

Common treatments are custom made orthotics (hard plastic inserts worn inside your shoes to correct the foot's alignment), using ice on the sore heel and arch, or physical therapy.

Another treatment that has become more popular is massage therapy. Studies have shown that the use of specific massage techniques, like cross-friction massage, on the plantar fascia and arch of the foot, has brought a decrease in pain and the symptoms for many patients.

These massage techniques increase blood flow to the area, which helps the body remove inflammation and waste products. In addition, the increased blood flow helps bring needed nutrients to those tissues, increasing the rate of healing.

If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with plantar fasciitis and would like to try massage therapy for this condition, please give your massage therapist a call. When you're in pain, it's hard to enjoy anything. Help your aching feet feel better and you can enjoy doing the fun things of summer again. *****



This trauma to the body will usually then result in the classic signs of redness, heat, swelling and pain, followed by primary and secondary disturbance of the body's system of pain response.

In the case of chronic pain, this pain experience can fluctuate between active and dormant stages.

The chronic stage of healing relates to recovery through rest. Management of the injury is geared towards the goal of complete restoration of original function and decreasing of discomfort.

One of the body's primary mechanisms for recovery is to physically immobilize the body part that has been injured to allow it to rest and recover. One of the ways it does this is called the pain/spasm cycle. This cycle can completely disrupt body movement or prevent motion in an extremity

Continued on Page 3

Managing Chronic Pain ...

Continued from page 2

by "splinting" the area and allow it to begin the healing process.

Often, soft tissue pain and spasm will outlast this initial phase and become chronic pain because the biological sensors in the tissue continue to react to noxious (bad) stimuli.

The negative stimuli can be caused by actual direct injury or trauma from mechanical causes, biochemical irritation, or even hot or cold temperature extremes.

The natural instinct to avoid or reduce pain can severely limit the daily activities of those dealing with this problem. It can even create additional anxiety or even depression about their condition on top of the pain that can sometimes be almost overwhelming.

Through massage it is possible to map the ways in which a particular body responds to stress, regardless of the originating cause.

Once it has been identified where the stress lodges in a person's body, it is possible to begin to address the cycle that is creating the painful reactions.

This starts by creating deep relaxation and stress reduction in tight, stiff muscles through out the body.

As muscular tension dissipates, muscle spasm and tension are reduced and nerves that may be entrapped or impinged by muscle begin to be released.

Blood and lymph fluids are brought into the area, bringing healing to the area, decreasing irritation and carrying away toxins.

The reduction in pain and discomfort promote deeper breathing and calmness. This allows the body to monitor stress signals and respond more appropriately, creating an increased awareness of the mind-

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body connection.

There is a reduction in anxiety and an increased feeling of well being as the level of pain recedes.

Massage can, and does provide a tool to help combat these problems. Numerous studies support the effectiveness of massage therapy. In fact, there is evidence that regular massage is more effective than occasional or infrequent treatments for chronic pain management.

While massage therapy isn't a "magic bullet", so far, nothing has been found that is a "cure-all" for every chronic pain case.

The good news is that massage has no complicating side effects, reduces a client's level of stress, encourages the body's natural healing ability and promotes increased well being.

For many clients, it also decreases the level of discomfort. And all of these are significant steps in the right direction! *****

Sample Issue, Help Your Practice, Bar

WORDS TO PONDER

Wherever you go, go with all your heart.

-Confucius

How To Take A Mini Vacation...Without Leaving Work!

Feeling frazzled by the current hectic pace of life and work? Wouldn't you love to be able to bring the feeling and benefits of massage with you to work? Well, now there's a way you can! It's called on-site chair massage, and it's a mini "stress break" that can assist you in "working away the stress" that's got you all tight and tense!

The University of Miami's School of Medicine did a recent study through their Touch Research Institute that demonstrated that those who received a 15-minute on-site chair massage twice per week had lower levels of alpha and beta waves, (indicating greater mental alertness), and a decrease in levels of stress and tension. Scientists have also discovered massage is capa-

ble of reducing blood pressure, boosting the immune system and stimulating the body's ability to heal faster.

Companies that have tried on-site chair massage have noticed a significant drop in headaches, back strain, neck and shoulder stiffness/strain, muscle tension and fatigue among employees since instituting an on-site chair massage program.

Instead of a coffee break, try a massage break. Soothing, relaxing and rejuvenating. Better for you than that extra caffeine, and longer lasting too. Consider bringing on-site chair massage to your work soon! *****

Why wait for a special occasion to show the people in your life how important they really are to you? Why not treat those significant folks to something as special and unique as they are: A massage tailored to their body's precise needs...maybe they'll be inspired to do the same for you!

