



# Expected Practices

Specialty: Podiatry  
Subject: Plantar Fasciitis in Adults  
Date: September 27, 2014

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**Purpose:**

To provide practice recommendations for treatment of Plantar Fasciitis to allow Primary Care Providers to manage the majority of cases in the Primary Care setting.

**Target Audience:**

Primary Care Providers (PCPs) with exercise instructions for use with their patients.

This *Expected Practice* was developed by a DHS Specialty-Primary Care Work Group to fulfill the DHS mission to ensure access to high-quality, patient-centered, and cost-effective health care. SPC Work Groups, composed of specialist and primary care provider representatives from across LA County DHS, are guided by 1) real-life practice conditions at our facilities, 2) available clinical evidence, and 3) the principle that we must provide equitable care for the entire population that LA County DHS is responsible for, not just those that appear in front of us. It is recognized that in individual situations a provider's clinical judgment may vary from this *Expected Practice*, but in such cases compelling documentation for the exception should be provided in the medical record.

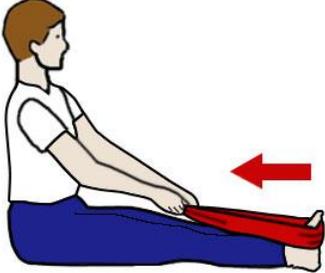
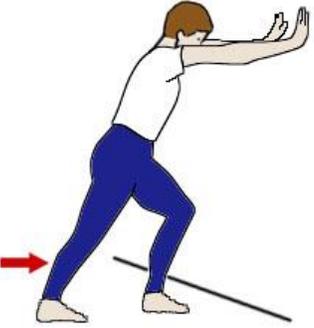
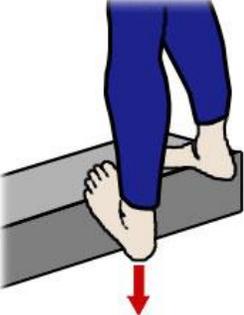
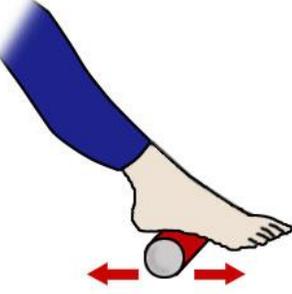
**Expected Practice:**

Presenting Conditions	Appropriate Actions
<p><b>Plantar fasciitis—to confirm diagnosis</b></p>	<p>Confirm diagnosis if pain is noted in plantar calcaneal region or arch of foot. Pain worst in the morning with first step and reduced after several minutes. Pain with prolonged standing and with first step after prolonged rest.</p> <p><u>Direct palpation of the plantar calcaneus region with dorsiflexion of the ankle and digits reproduces the pain.</u></p> <p>Radiographic finding: <u>Not required.</u> Diagnosis of plantar fasciitis is clinical and calcaneal spur may or may not be present.</p>
<p><b>Treatment prior to referral to Podiatry</b></p>	<p>Initiate R-I-C-E or rest, ice, compression, and elevation.</p> <p>Cold packs or equivalent can be applied directly to the calcaneus for 20 minutes or a frozen bottle of water can be used to roll across the arch and heel. NSAIDs can be prescribed if tolerated.</p> <p><b><u>A regimen of the stretching exercises is illustrated in the Expected Practices for Plantar Fasciitis –Patient Education Component.</u></b> Instruct patient to following 10 repetitions of each, 3 times a day for 4 weeks.</p> <p>Patients should wear shoes with arch support and avoid wearing flats or going barefoot. Over the counter orthotics (Superfeet™ orthotic) or night splint (from PT) can be recommended.</p>
<p><b>When to Refer:</b></p> <p><b>If symptoms do not resolve within 2 to 4 months</b></p>	<p>Refer to Podiatry via e-Consult, describing duration of the condition, prior treatment pursued, and patient compliance with exercise regimen.</p> <p>For conditions unresponsive to mechanical therapy and which may involve a neurological component, injection therapy is occasionally but rarely utilized. Injection therapy falls within the purview of the specialist. Other modes to be evaluated by the specialist include eConsult dialog with Physical Therapy about intrinsic muscle exercise and ultrasound treatment (Iontophoresis).</p>

## Patient Instructions: Plantar Fasciitis Stretching Exercises

Routine stretching is very important in healing plantar fasciitis. Most of those affected by plantar fasciitis have decreased flexibility and tight Achilles Tendons.

**10 repetitions of each, 3 times a day for 4 weeks.**

<p><b>Towel Stretch</b> Sit on the floor with your legs stretched out in front of you. Loop a towel around the top of the injured foot. Slowly pull the towel towards to keeping your body straight. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds then relax - repeat 10 times.</p>	
<p><b>Calf/Achilles Stretch</b> Stand facing a wall place your hands on the wall chest high. Move the injured heel back and with the foot flat on the floor. Move the other leg forward and slowly lean toward the wall until you feel a stretch through the calf hold and repeat.</p>	
<p><b>Stair Stretch</b> Stand on a step on the balls for your feet, hold the rail or wall for balance. Slow lower the heel of the injured foot to stretch the arch of your foot.</p>	
<p><b>Frozen Can Roll</b> Roll your bare injured foot back and forth from the tip of the toes to the heel over a frozen juice can. This is a good exercise after activity because not only stretches the plantar fascia but provides cold therapy to the injured area.</p>	
<p><b>Toe Stretch</b> Sit on the floor with knee bent. Pull the toes back on the injured foot until stretch across the arch is felt. Hold and repeat.</p>	

