

# How I Manage Plantar Fasciitis

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The plantar fascia is a tough thick band. Its 3 fibrous structures help hold up the arch - from the heel to the ball of the foot. A rich, unrestricted blood supply and high degree of flexibility are essential for proper functioning. A minor tear or pull in the fascia can painfully hamper daily activities. It can mimic the pain of a stone bruise in the heel.

"If heel pain is felt during the first few steps after sleep - I immediately think of a problem with the plantar fascia", says Dr William Hamilton, Orthopedic Surgeon for the N Y City Ballet.

## Some Common Causes

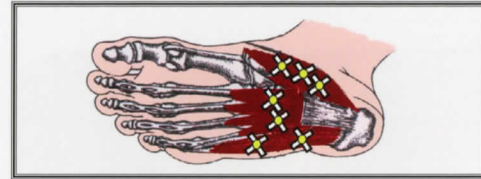
- Over-training
- Constant contact with hard or irregular surfaces
- Structural / biomechanical abnormalities
- Repeated stress to the foot
- Improper footwear
- Obesity

Dr Perry H Julian, foot specialist for the 1996 Olympic games, states, "One of the most common causes of plantar fasciitis is tightness of the calf muscles and achilles tendon." I agree with Dr. Julian. More importantly muscle tightness is usually traced to trigger points. And, that's where my approach is focused.

## Trigger Points

When the foot is fatigued the musculature becomes compromised. Muscular support and locomotion are hampered. An environment ripe for the creation of trigger points is generated. Trigger points are sore, knotty, involuntary contractions of muscle bundles. They prevent the host muscle from relaxing and recovering. Trigger points are painful. These aggravating little knots can be found in any muscle. In fact, trigger points in the calf often refer pain directly to the bottom of the foot. Therefore, trigger point therapy of the lower leg and foot is essential in the management, as well as prevention, of plantar fasciitis.

## Common Trigger Points of the Foot



## Common Trigger Points of the Lower Limb



## Leg Regimen

I like to start the procedure with the lower leg. I recommend and use a trigger point therapy product called the Intracell Stick. Of the several different models, I prefer the short length with good flexibility. The Intracell Stick compresses and stretches muscle. It simultaneously moves fluids. The Stick performs trigger point therapy and myofascial release - with virtually no effort.

### Step 1 - [about 30 seconds]

- Place the hands close together for better control and easier use of the Stick
- Begin by rolling the muscles outside the shin bone - use short, specific, back-and-forth strokes
- Roll lengthwise, starting at just below the knee to immediately above the ankle
- Search for trigger points [ouch pain] and roll with a progressively deeper pressure. When found ... roll trigger points an additional 10 - 15 seconds



### Step 2 – [about 45 seconds]

- Follow the same procedure for all the calf muscles as you did in step 1
- The area between the two large muscles of the calf, downward to the heel cord, usually needs special attention
- I always end the session on the calf with several long back-and-forth strokes



### Foot Regimen

Treatment to the bottom of the foot has always presented a problem for me. In the past I've massaged my own feet with coke bottles, frozen cans of juice, golf balls - you name it. Recently I discovered a simple, yet very effective, body tool, that absolutely eliminates shortened, tight plantar fascia. It's called a FootWheel.

The FootWheel easily compresses and stretches the complex musculature of the plantar fascia. This process increases fluid circulation and rapidly permits chronically shortened muscles to relax and recover. The 3 treating surfaces of the FootWheel are designed to target the 3 major support muscles of the foot.

### Step 3 - [about 45 seconds]

- Place the FootWheel on a thick carpet or heavy towel, always stand
- Support your weight on the opposite side, and begin rolling bottom of the foot. Use gentle, pleasant, but firm pressure
- Roll the 3 therapeutic wheels to locate and destroy trigger points
- Trigger points will be recognized as tight, knotty, tender bands of muscle
- When trigger points are located [ouch pain] – continue rolling for 15 / 20 additional seconds
- Move slowly and be gentle. Use specific, short, back-and-forth movements
- Be sure to tilt and roll the foot – on both the inside and outside – before completing the session



The foregoing is an amazingly effective procedure to prevent or manage plantar fasciitis. It takes about 3 minutes. Use the techniques at least twice per day - namely before and after a night's sleep. Use more often as needed. Keep the sessions short and gentle to avoid soreness. Progress is gauged by the way you feel and the number of trigger points you extinguish. Healthy, happy feet are free of tenderness, soreness & pain ... even during rollouts.

Good luck and keep on rolling!

*REMEMBER, this article is based on empirical findings of the author. The suggestions, procedures and ideas are not intended to replace or substitute the medical advice of the readers' healthcare provider. Please consult your personal healthcare practitioner before adopting the suggestions.*