

Heel Pain

Excessive Pronation

Heel pain sometimes results from excessive pronation. Pronation is the normal flexible motion of the foot that allows it to adapt to ground surfaces and absorb shock in the normal walking pattern. As you walk, the heel contacts the ground first. The weight shifts first to the outside of the foot, then moves toward the big toe. The arch rises, then the foot generally rolls upward and outward, becoming rigid and stable to lift the body and move it forward. Excessive pronation (excessive inward motion) can create an abnormal amount of stretching and pulling on the fascia while jogging or running. Excessive pronation may also contribute to injury to the hip, knee and lower back.

This condition can be helped through the use of proper orthotics and adequate running shoes that fit well and provide the proper support. A good “gait analysis” is especially helpful in determining the degree to which an individual “pronates” and what can be done to counter the condition. Do not mistake knee pain as an injury to the knee. Many times, knee pain is the result of excessive pronation.

Stretching, ice, and exercise are important in the rehabilitation process for heel pain. Using a heel cup (example: Tulis®) can also assist in reducing discomfort.

