

HEEL PAIN

Heel pain is a common complaint among people in all age groups and on the increase in senior citizens. People who suffer from heel pain have varying occupations. Some stand for long hours while others are primarily sitting. Pain is most severe when arising from rest causing one to limp when getting up from bed in the morning or getting up from sitting in a chair. The pain usually lessens as one walks but then becomes severe again after being on one's feet for hours.

The pain is caused by an inflammatory process or bursitis just like a bursitis involving the knee, shoulder or elbow. The bursitis may or may not be associated with a heel spur which can be seen on x-ray.

HEEL SPUR SURGERY IS ALMOST NEVER NECESSARY !!!!!

Many people with large heel spurs have never experienced heel pain. The pain and inflammation can usually be totally relieved with a series of shots, treatments and bandages at weekly intervals. Most people are completely pain free in 1 to 3 weeks.

After the pain and inflammation are completely gone, 50% of the people will require no further care. In the other 50% the pain begins to return after a short time. This can be controlled by the wearing of custom molded orthotics in one's shoes to control the motion of the foot and to protect the heel. The Podiatrist takes plaster molds of the feet and, after making the necessary corrections to the molds, has the orthotics made in a laboratory. Orthotics are not prescribed for all patients with heel pain as at least one half of them will not need the devices.

Heel Pain Diagram

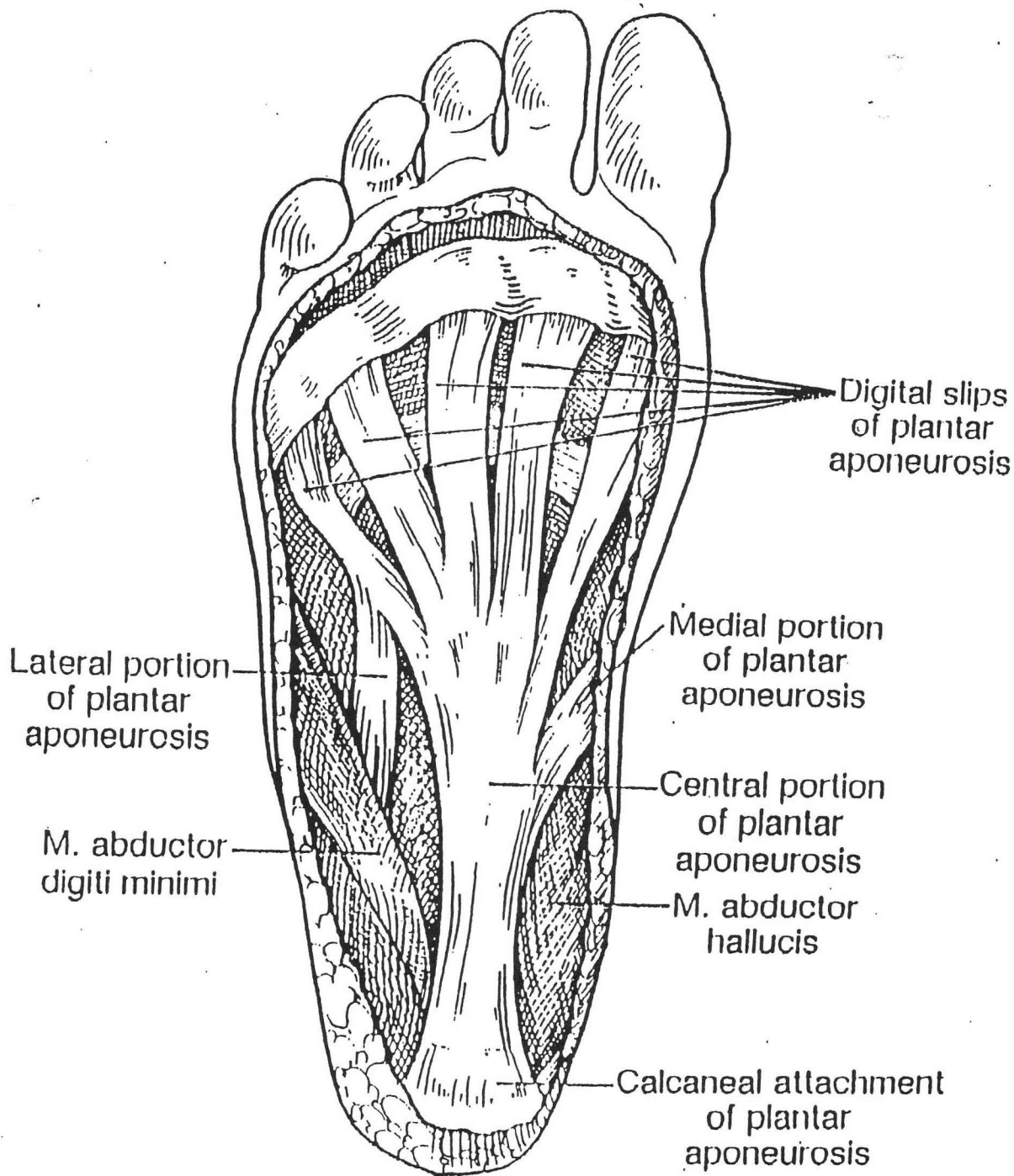


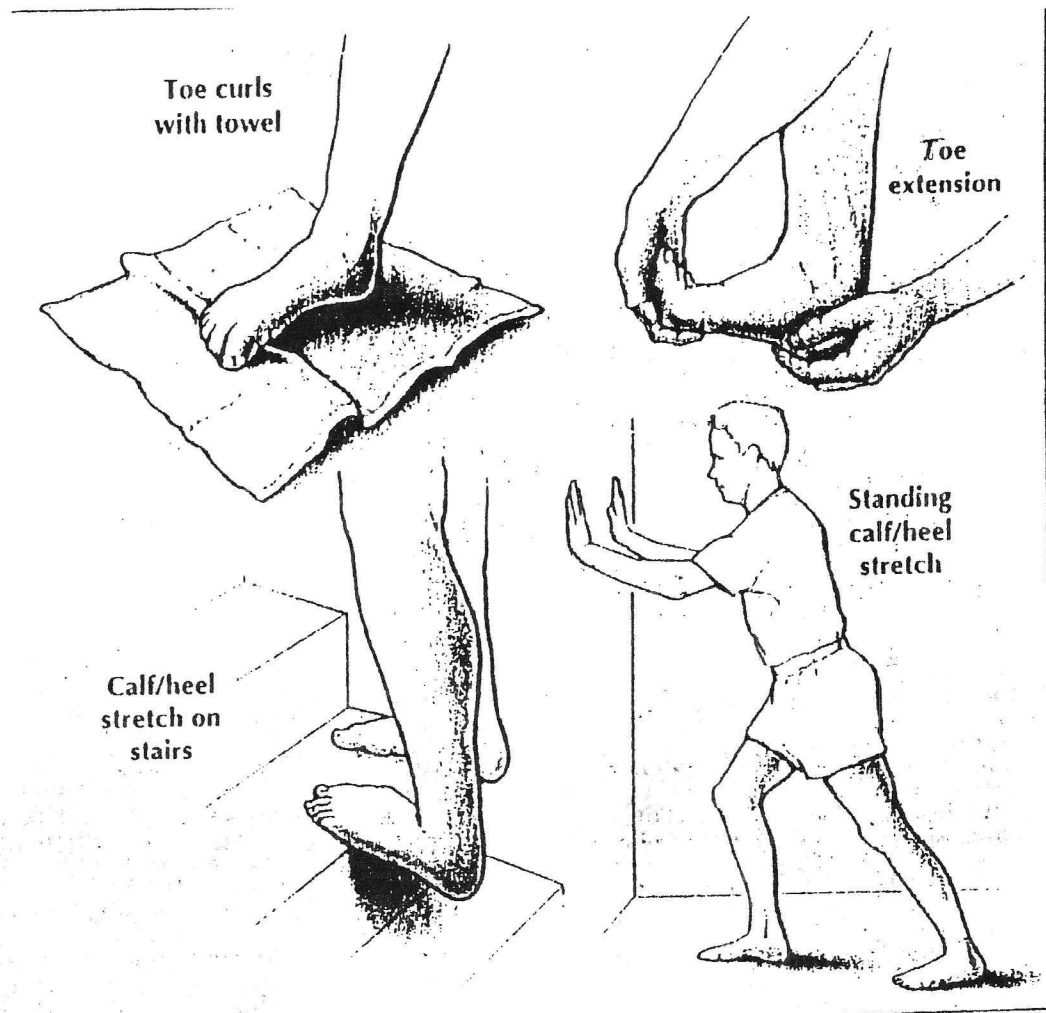
Figure 1.64. Plantar aponeurosis. (Modified from Warwick R, Williams PL (eds): *Gray's Anatomy*, ed 35 British. Philadelphia, WB Saunders Co, 1973.)

Stretching Exercises

For the prevention of recurrent heel pain

If you utilize these stretching exercises and you experience heel pain- Contact our office at once!

In addition to these exercises you may try a heel pad or heel cup. Icing the heel and arch can also be very beneficial. Take a filled water bottle, freeze it, and then roll it along the bottom of the foot and heel for 10 to 15 minutes per hour.



These exercises stretch or strengthen your plantar fascia, Achilles' tendon and calf muscles. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, and do one or two repetitions two to three times a day.