

PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

Plantar Fasciitis: How OMT can Help

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Plantar fasciitis is inflammation of plantar fascia, which is a tissue that extends from the heel of your foot to the ball of your foot. The fascia's purpose is to absorb and distribute the various stresses placed on the foot from walking, running and jumping. If the fascia becomes irritated or inflamed, it can cause a stabbing-like pain near your heel that is typically worsened throughout the day.

OMT TREATMENT

Osteopathic manipulative treatments (OMT) are hands-on techniques performed by osteopathic physicians to help alleviate pain and treat multiple disease processes by increasing mobility and encouraging your body's natural tendency toward self-healing. Overall, OMT is a gentle, non-invasive and painless treatment option.

In plantar fasciitis, OMT is used to manipulate the bones and connective tissues in the foot to help improve alignment, more effective weight-bearing and stretching of the fascia through different mechanisms. Below is a list of some examples:

- **Counterstrain:** The physician will point your toes downward until the pain in your heel is significantly reduced, then they will hold this position for 90 seconds.
- **Muscle energy:** The physician will place your foot in a certain position and will have you exert a brief flexion of the foot that helps target specific muscle groups in your foot that need to be stretched and relaxed.
- **Myofascial release:** The physician will engage and hold tissues in a specific position to either generate or alleviate tension in the tissues.

WHERE TO GET OMT TREATMENT

You will need to locate a doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO) to obtain OMT. These are physicians who attended four years of medical school and have additional medical training to perform OMT.

OTHER TREATMENT OPTIONS

There are many different treatment options for plantar fasciitis, including stretching, ice therapy, massage, foot orthotics, modification of your footwear, nighttime splinting, shock wave therapy, anti-inflammatory medications, such as a cortisone injection, and surgery.

If you have any questions about plantar fasciitis or believe you may have it, please contact your primary care physician. In case of any emergency, you should call your doctor or 911 immediately.

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