

In Step

Plantar Fasciitis

by Dr. Arthur Lukoff, D.P.M.

A very common condition is heel pain, commonly known as a heel spur. A heel spur is a growth of bone that comes out of the bottom of the bone and points in the direction of the toes. It is believed that the spur itself does not cause the pain. The pain is from excessive pull on the



ligament that attaches to the heel bone. This pull forms the spur. The ligament is called the plantar fascia. When it becomes too tight it becomes inflamed and it becomes plantar fasciitis. The most common complaint from patients is that when they get up in the morning they have pain in the heel. The pain seems to diminish as they try to walk on the foot. A recent study shows that 95-97% of patients

get better with conservative treatment. This includes taping, orthotics, night splints, stretching, anti-inflammatories, and icing. A new modality is called ESWT, which uses sound waves to improve the condition. This procedure is new and the jury is still out on it. Surgery, which was very common in the past, has fallen out of favor and is only used on 1-2% of patients with this problem. A detailed Biomechanical exam can pinpoint why your plantar fascia might be giving you a problem. ❖

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