



Conclusion

Plantar fasciitis is a "work-related disease". Although work is only one of the many risk factors in the development of the disease, the chance of getting this disease can be minimized by eliminating the health hazards at work or reducing their risks, and adopting appropriate preventive measures.

Enquiry Service

For enquiries on this pamphlet or advice on occupational health and hygiene matters, please contact the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the Labour Department through:

Telephone : 2852 4041
 Fax : 2581 2049
 E-mail : enquiry@labour.gov.hk

Information on the services offered by the Labour Department and on major labour legislation can also be found on our website <http://www.labour.gov.hk>.

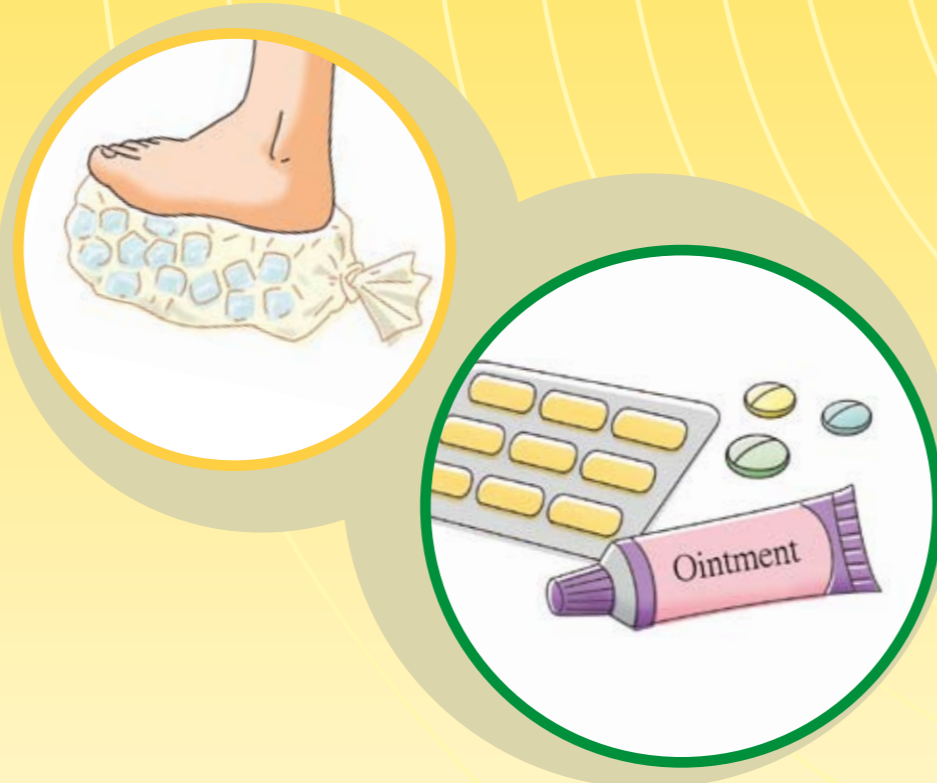
Information on the services provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Council can be obtained through its hotline 2739 9000 and website <http://www.oshc.org.hk>.

Complaints

If you have any complaints about unsafe workplace and practices, please call the Labour Department's Occupational Safety and Health Complaint Hotline at 2542 2172. All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.

How to treat it?

- ▶ Rest - Suitable rest can reduce stress on the foot and pressure over the sole
- ▶ Cold therapy - Wrap ice cubes in a towel and apply it over the sore part for 5-10 minutes can relieve swelling and pain



- ▶ Medication - Oral, topical and local injection of analgesics can help to relieve pain and control inflammation
- ▶ Physiotherapy - Alleviate symptoms of inflammation and strengthen muscles and tendons
- ▶ Podiatry - Fitting of suitable insoles for your shoes

Foot exercise

- 1 Sit on a chair. Place a towel on the floor and step on it
- 2 Keep your toes flat while grasping the towel with the sole, then relax
- 3 Repeat this movement 20 times
- 4 Perform the exercise 20 times with the other foot



5. Healthy lifestyle

- ▶ Adequate rest and sleep
- ▶ Regular exercises
- ▶ Balanced diet and avoid overweight



Introduction

Work



Health

Work and health are closely related. While our work could affect our health, our health could also affect our work.

According to the International Labour Organization, the relationship between work and disease can be classified into the following three categories:

- (1) Occupational diseases - have specific or strong relationship to the exposure to physical, chemical, biological or psychosocial factors in the workplace. These factors in the work environment are predominant and essential in the causation of the diseases, for example, silicosis, asbestosis, occupational deafness, etc.
- (2) Work-related diseases - are multifactorial in origin, where factors in the work environment may play a role, together with other risk factors, in the development of such diseases, for example, plantar fasciitis, lower limb varicose vein, shoulder tendonitis, etc.
- (3) General diseases - are diseases affecting the working population. They do not have causal relationship with work but may be aggravated by occupational health hazards, for example, diabetes mellitus, gout, rheumatoid arthritis, etc.

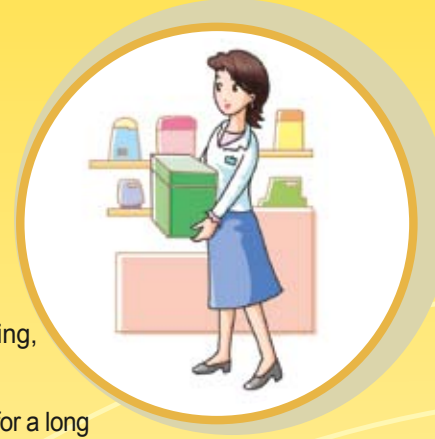
This pamphlet introduces plantar fasciitis which is a common "work-related disease".

What is plantar fasciitis?

It refers to the inflammation of plantar fascia and the soft tissues around it due to injury or strain.

Causes

- ▶ Personal factors e.g. overweight, flat foot, club foot etc.
- ▶ Prolonged standing or walking, thus straining the foot
- ▶ Wearing inappropriate shoes for a long period of time e.g. body too tight, sole too hard or heel too high
- ▶ Other factors, e.g. increased stress on the foot due to frequent carrying of heavy objects



Signs and Symptoms

Heel pain

- ▶ Particularly significant when stepping out of bed in the morning
- ▶ Worsens after prolonged standing or walking

Redness, swelling or heat may be noticed at the affected part of the foot



Which occupations have a higher risk?

Teachers, postmen, deliverymen and sales personnel, etc.

How to prevent it?

1. Rest the foot

- ▶ Avoid prolonged standing or walking, for example, arrange appropriate rest breaks for employees who are required to stand for more than 2 hours continuously
- ▶ Sit and rest or perform some foot exercises after standing or walking for a period of time

2. Reduce pressure on the foot

- ▶ Avoid carrying heavy objects or use trolleys when needed
- ▶ Reduce body weight as appropriate
- ▶ Use of antifatigue mat

3. Select suitable shoes

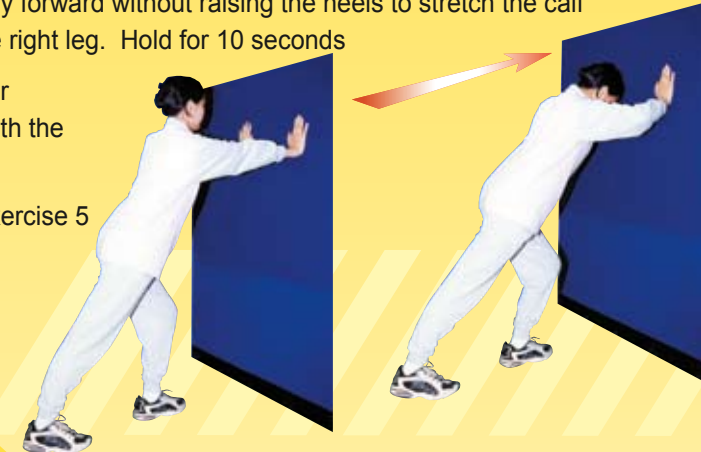
- ▶ Preferred qualities
 - ▶ Comfortable and light-weight
 - ▶ Softer soles with better shock absorption ability, thus decreasing shock arising from walking
- ▶ Appropriate insoles can be used, if necessary, to reduce pressure on the foot
- ▶ Avoid wearing high-heel shoes, for example, over 5 cm or 2 inches high



4. Suitable exercises

▶ Calf muscles stretching exercise

- 1 Stand and place your hands on a wall. Bend your left leg and stretch your right leg backward with your toes pointing forward
- 2 Lean your body forward without raising the heels to stretch the calf muscles of the right leg. Hold for 10 seconds
- 3 Perform similar movements with the other leg
- 4 Repeat this exercise 5 times



▶ Ankle exercise

- 1 Be seated. Raise one leg. Rotate your foot clockwise 10 times
- 2 Then rotate your foot anti-clockwise 10 times
- 3 Repeat the same movements 10 times each with the other leg

