

How Can They Be Helped? (continued)

Second, **address predisposing factors**. This may include modifying shoe wear, changing habits, and resolving areas of weakness, tightness, or abnormal movement in the feet and throughout the body. While some things may not be changeable (such as a job that requires standing on concrete or wearing steel toe shoes), identifying and addressing problems that are modifiable can go a long way at resolving symptoms and making feet functional instead of a source of misery.



Appalachian Physical Therapy
"There's a difference you can feel"



Below are some of our other brochures that may provide you with more information regarding your condition and treatment techniques referenced.

- Fascia: The Fascinating Tissue That Governs How We Move
- Dry Needling: Intramuscular Manual Therapy
- Shoe Wear Recommendations
- Activities of Daily Living: Stop Beating Yourself Up

If you have further questions feel free to visit our website or contact one of our offices.

Referral not necessary in many cases

❖ *Se Habla Español* ❖



Appalachian Physical Therapy
"There's a difference you can feel"

Plantar Fasciitis Heel Pain



Well over a million people seek help for foot symptoms each year. Considering the important role feet play in everyday living, problems with them can be both limiting and life-changing...

Broadway 171 East Springbrook Rd. 540-901-9501
Harrisonburg 2035 E. Market St., Suite 45
Harrisonburg, VA 22801 540-209-8977

... Typical interventions include stretching, orthotics, night splints, massage, activity restriction, ice, exercise, medication, injections, and surgery. Often these approaches are, at best, of minimal benefit, expensive, and frustratingly slow to produce change. Over time persistent, unresolved issues can lead to heel spurs, balance deficits, and limping.



What Causes These Problems?

Often people blame diabetes. But many people who are not diabetic suffer with similar problems, which undermines the logic of blaming diabetes. “Neuropathy” is often diagnosed when pain, numbness, and tingling occur in diabetics as well as non-diabetics. This still does not explain what is compressing or irritating nerves, especially in the absence of diabetes. Heel spurs are often diagnosed, even when an X-ray is not done. Yet studies show that heel spurs are found in asymptomatic individuals, making one question whether this truly can be considered a reliable

source of pain. Plantar fasciitis is another common diagnosis, but lacks relevant criteria for diagnosing and treating it.

A growing body of research supports that **overload of soft tissues (muscle, fascia)** is responsible for many of these symptoms – in both the diabetic and non-diabetic populations. Overload comes in many forms: running a marathon, jumping from a high surface, increased time on feet, or walking on uneven terrain may bring on acute symptoms. But, **more often, overload comes from less obvious culprits that occur slowly, over time** such as: standing or walking on concrete; wearing heels, steel-toe boots, or unsupportive / worn out shoes; attempting to start an exercise program; weight gain or pregnancy; a change in usual and customary activity. 20-30 minutes of a sustained activity can trigger the release of biochemicals in the body that normally occur in trauma. These chemicals are often pro-inflammatory and painful. This is why taking pain or anti-inflammatory medication, rest, and ice may temporarily help the symptoms. But these do nothing to address the underlying cause so the symptoms return.



How Can They Be Helped?

Successful resolution has two elements:

First, **remove the biochemicals** released in response to the soft tissue overload and arrest the negative effects they exert on the body: pain, inflammation, restriction, weakness, and eventually changes in the joints and bones. *Fascial Manipulation*® as well as *Dry Needling* can be very helpful for removing these biochemicals and restoring mobility, flexibility, and function.

In *Fascial Manipulation*®, the therapist uses friction from a knuckle or elbow at very specific sites where fascial layers are compressed and adhered. These sites are often found in the feet, calves, and sometimes continue into the hips and back. *Dry Needling* can also be helpful for resolving myofascial trigger points or knots in muscles that keep the muscle contracted leading to pain, fatigue, and overload. Again, sites requiring treatment may extend beyond the feet. *(Continued on back)*