

Night Splints

Night splints have been proven to be an effective treatment for heel pain.

Night splints are easy to use.

Night splints for heel pain are readily available from pharmacies or the internet.

Night splints treat the symptoms. They do not attend to the cause.

A health care professional with experience in managing lower extremity injuries can assist in discovering what led to excessive stress on the heel, as well as how to facilitate healing and preventing recurrence.



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Heel Pain Treatment Using Night Splints



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Night Splints for Heel Pain

Plantar fasciitis (pronounced fashee-Eye-tiss), an overuse injury affecting the sole of the foot, is a common diagnosis for individuals suffering with heel pain.

A common treatment for this problem is a night splint, which is an appliance that holds the foot and ankle in an optimal position while sleeping.



Rationale

When sleeping, the foot and ankle will assume a downward pointed position under the weight of bedcovers. As part of the normal process of healing an injury, there is a contraction of the injured tissues and usually a scar is formed. Using a night splint to hold the foot/ankle in a position that equals the standing position, helps minimize the contraction of the injured tissue and tearing of the scar, which can occur when getting out of bed in the morning.

Where to purchase

Night splints can be purchased from a variety of sources. Prices vary from \$40 to \$100. A physician's prescription is not required. Most health insurance plans do not cover the cost. There is a variety of types & designs. There is little evidence that one particular design is better than another. Choice can be made on comfort & cost.

- Buford Road Pharmacy 804-272-1423
- Midlothian Apothecary 804-794-5592
- AliMed - www.alimed.com

How to use a night splint

- Use the adjustments to bring the foot to a position equal to the angle/position of standing. It should feel snug, but avoid excess tension.
- Gradually build up your wearing time to sleep through the night. If you cannot tolerate sleeping with it, wear it several hours when resting.
- Keep bed covers loose.
- Use the splint until the morning heel pain is alleviated, usually 2 to 8 weeks
- When you can get out of bed in morning without heel pain, start weaning away from using the splint. The first week, use the splint every other night. The next week use the splint every third night, then discontinue.



What caused the heel pain

It is important to note that night splints do not address the cause of an overuse injury.

Questions need to be answered to find what issues led to increased stress to the bottom of the heel and how the stress can be eliminated or modified. A health care professional with experience in managing lower extremity injuries can assist you in this process.

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