

MANAGING HEEL SPURS

Heel Spurs Can Occur Alone or be Related to Underlying Diseases

More than 90% of People Get Better with Nonsurgical Treatment for Heel Spurs

Heel spurs can be painful, bothersome and persistent, causing problems in everyday life. Chronic pain can leave anyone seeking answers and support. While heel spurs can be located on the back of the heel or under the heel, it can be the inflammation that causes the most pain and discomfort.

Please use this guide as a resource for knowledge and understanding of heel spur causes, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment.

01 | Cause

Heel spurs occur when calcium deposits build up on the underside of the heel bone, a process that usually occurs over a period of many months. The most common cause of heel spurs is a strain injury of the tendons and tissues that attach to the heel bone. Stretching of the plantar fascia and repeat tearing of the membrane that covers the heel bone can cause heel spurs. Risk factors for heel spurs include:

- Walking gait abnormalities, which place excessive stress on the heel bone, ligaments, and nerves near the heel
- Running or jogging on hard surfaces
- Poorly fitted or badly worn shoes
- Excess weight and obesity

02 | Symptoms

A patient may not suffer any symptoms of a heel spur. If there is chronic pain or inflammation after walking, jogging, or running you may seek help from a physician. The pain associated with heel spurs has been described as a knife or pin sticking into the heel when first putting pressure on the foot after extended time at rest. Much of the pain may subside to a dull ache as the foot is walked on. Chronic pain spanning over a long period of time could be a symptom of something more serious. It is always suggested to see a healthcare provider to discuss any symptoms.

03 | Diagnosis

Heel spurs can be diagnosed via ultrasound or x-ray, to locate and identify the bone like calcium build-up on the heel bone. Identifying any underlying illnesses such as plantar fasciitis, tendinosis, or systemic arthritis is necessary in order to properly treat the heel spur. Any underlying cause must be addressed in order to have successful treatment.

04 | Treatment

Most treatment options are strictly to relieve the pain and inflammation. In some extreme cases surgery may be necessary. Treatment options available are:

- Stretching exercises
- Special shoes
- Taping or strapping to rest stressed muscles and tendons
- Shoe inserts or orthotic devices
- Physical therapy
- Spur removal (surgical)
- Release of the plantar fascia (surgical)

For more information on heel spur sand other podiatric conditions, please visit: <http://www.ampa.org/>

*Did You Know?
There are 52 bones in a
pair of feet*

References

http://www.emedicinehealth.com/heel_spurs/article_em.htm

<http://www.webmd.com/pain-management/heel-spurs-pain-causes-symptoms-treatments#1>