

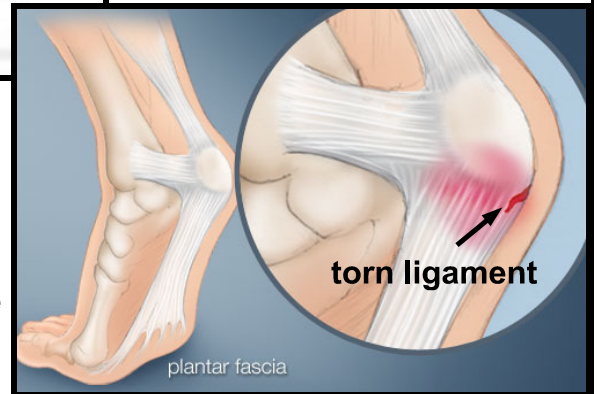
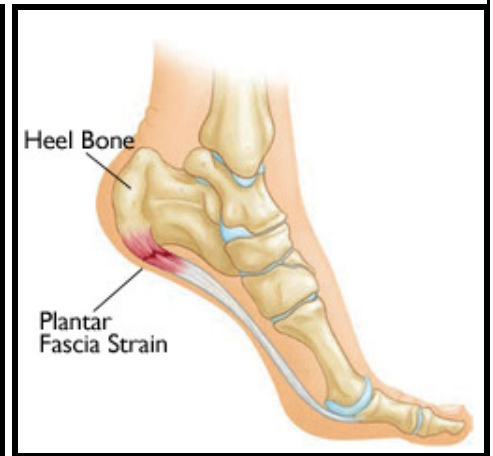
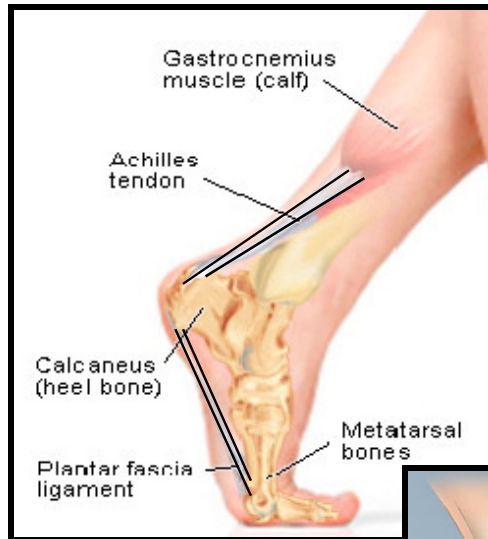
Heel and Foot Pain - a common Polio foot problem by Tessa Jupp RN

These feet problems are not of course confined to polio survivors. If muscles in legs and feet are weaker from polio it does bring more problems than for others. If our feet are comfortable and pain-free we manage much better so if there are ways of fixing some of these problems, let's do it sooner not later!

Heel Pain

The most common cause of heel pain is **plantar fasciitis**, which is inflammation of the long ligament that stretches from the toes to the heel bone. The pain may be sharpest when you first wake up and put pressure on the foot. Arthritis, excessive exercise, and poor-fitting shoes also can cause heel pain, as can **tendonitis**.

Tendons join muscle to bone (as in **Achilles' tendon**) and ligaments join bone to bone (as in **Plantar fascia ligament**). If you look at these pictures you can see that if the tendons or ligaments are tight and strain is put on them they are likely to tear and will become extremely painful. This is a soft tissue injury and **Hirudoid cream** (from chemist) works well on any soft tissue injury - rub in a little every 4-6 hours as needed initially. The other things we need to keep tendons etc in good repair so that they can stretch as needed is primarily **manganese** (you may need 3 or 4 of manganese chelate 200 mg twice a day when it is really bad. Diarrhoea will tell you if you are taking too much - so reduce dose don't stop it.); and also **gelatine, vitamins C and B6**. These are all part of maintaining and repairing this type of body tissue and also cartilage - see where the bones join - these spots are mini joints with cushioning cartilage and joint coverings. Vit C and B6 as well as gelatine reduce inflammation and hasten repair. Take 3-4 teaspoons of gelatine per day in hot drinks; 200-400 mg of B6 and Vit C twice daily to bowel tolerance ie just below the dose that gives you diarrhoea. You will see the calf muscle above as well and if this is tight you need **magnesium** chelate twice a day to relax the muscle too



Heel Spur

A less common cause of heel pain is a bone spur where the ligament attaches to the heel bone. We know that weight bearing exercise increases bone density as the muscle pulls on the bone. Equally too much pressure from tight muscles will stimulate bony-spur growth where it is not wanted, causing pain. If this occurs, relieve the pressure by taking **magnesium and manganese** but you will also need **regular B12 injections** to relieve the inflammation and bone pain. Two ampoules of B12 1000 mcg given together 3 times a week will usually resolve this in 2-3 weeks. The same **B12 injection** regime **works for bursitis and for shingles** (but not by using oral B12 as it is poorly absorbed from the gut.) Prescription not needed.



Stress Fractures

Stress fractures can occur in any of the smaller (or larger bones) of polio feet as with poor muscle strength from polio, the bones are likely to be osteoporotic anyway. Stress fractures also cause unrelenting pain and the fractures are often missed on standard x-rays but may show up on a nuclear scan. As the treatment is **borax and magnesium together** (this will **take the pain out of any fracture within 48 hours**) you might as well try this before the expense of further irradiation. We have **pharmaceutical grade borax (boron)** at the **Polio Office, \$10 for 100g**. Lick the top one third of your forefinger (both sides for a fracture) dip in the borax powder, lick off finger and wash down with a drink once a day. (The size of your finger is in proportion to your body and is your best measure.) Take magnesium twice daily on empty stomach to bowel tolerance (need more than normal with fractures). Some of our polio members have broken bones in ankles, toes and legs just stepping in doorways, walking or even rising with waves in the sea.. Taking **gelatine, borax and magnesium** regularly will not only help with muscles and arthritis, but help with poor bone density. Pain, swelling, redness, and bruising may be signs of a fracture. **Vitamin C raises your pain threshold** so the pain is not so bad.

Peripheral Neuritis

Loss of sensation, pins and needles, tingling or sharp pain can result from nerve interference. Taking **Vits B1, B6 and B12** may help as they support nerve function. **Magnesium** can help with **cold feet** and Vit **B5** helps with **burning feet**.