

An X-ray image of a human foot, specifically the heel area. A red arrow points upwards to a small, sharp protrusion on the bottom of the heel bone, which is a heel spur. The rest of the foot's bones are visible in a lighter, semi-transparent style.

Know the facts on

# Heel Spurs

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## What are Heel Spurs?

A heel spur is an abnormal growth of the heel bone. Patient's report that the pain is often worse in the morning and the first step out of bed can cause terrible pain.

Heel spurs develop due to calcium deposits that form when the plantar fascia pulls away from the heel.



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## What causes Heel Spurs?

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Any activity that causes the plantar fascia to extend or stretch excessively can cause a heel spur to develop. The body's defence mechanism is to deposit calcium in the heel area resulting in the heel spur. Athletes are particularly prone to developing heel spurs. Physically demanding jobs where heavy equipment is lifted can also increase the risk. Women also have a higher incidence rate due to footwear choices.

## What will happen if I leave it untreated?

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If the heel spur is not addressed patients may experience prolonged periods of pain and discomfort. The heel pain may become more persistent and begin to affect you when you stand following periods of sitting down or rest.



## What can help?

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Stretching exercises, losing weight and wearing shoes that have a cushioned heel that absorbs shock can help to relieve the discomfort of a heel spur. Elevating the heel with the use of a heel cradle, heel cup, or orthotic can also help. Heel cradles and heel cups provide extra comfort and cushion to the heel, and reduce the amount of shock and shear forces experienced from everyday activities.

## What are the treatment options?

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The key for the proper treatment of heel spurs is determining what is causing the excessive stretching of the plantar fascia. When the cause is over-pronation (flat feet), an orthotic with rearfoot posting and longitudinal arch support is an effective device, and allow the condition to heal.

If the pain from the heel spur does not respond to conservative treatment your Podiatrist or Doctor may consider a cortisone injection.