



# FOOT SENSE

A monthly newsletter from your podiatrist



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## Don't Let A Heel Pain Flare-Up Ruin Your Summer

If you've had plantar fasciitis or some other type of heel pain, you know how bad it can be. The last thing you want is a flare-up of these conditions, particularly in the warmer months when you want to go hiking, running, or engage in your favorite sport.



Unfortunately if you've had it, you're at a much higher risk of getting it again. That's because you likely still have the risk factors that caused you to develop it in the first place, namely, poor biomechanics, tight calf muscles, and/or a high level of activity. Any of these issues can lead to heel pain.

### How to Prevent Heel Pain From Recurring

Fortunately you can prevent a recurrence of plantar fasciitis. Here's how:

#### Wear Your Orthotics All the Time

Wearing your orthotics all the time ensures that your plantar fascia, the ligament that's affected at the bottom of the heel, is not overstressed.

#### Get A New Pair of Orthotics

If your orthotics are over 3 years old, you've gained weight, or you have heel pain it's important to come in to get reassessed. You may need a new pair.

#### Keep Stretching Your Calf Muscles

Many people with heel pain are also diagnosed with tight calf muscles. Keeping them stretched is essential in preventing a

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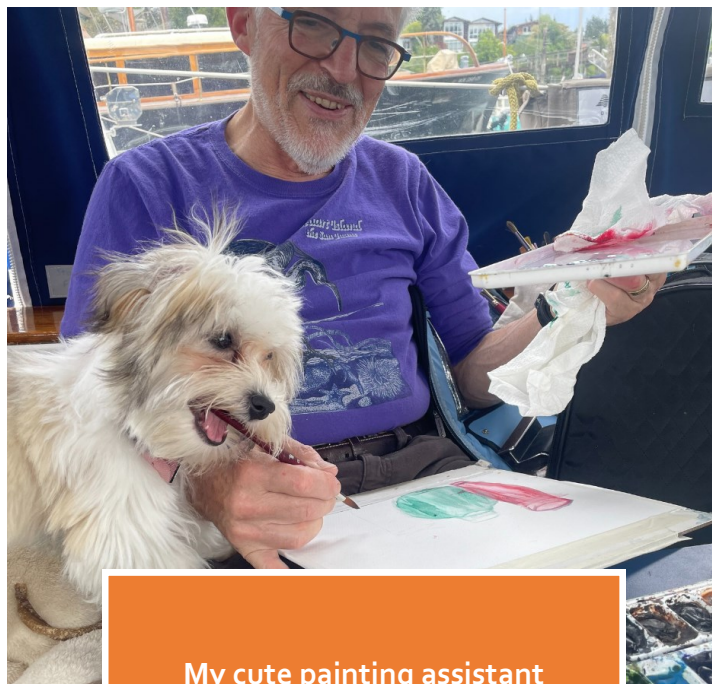
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### Redi-Thotics

\$40-\$50

A great solution while you wait for your custom orthotics.





My cute painting assistant



Health & Fitness Expo in Edmonds

## Feta and Olive Stuffed Eggplant

- 2 large eggplants (about 1 pound each)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 medium red onion, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup canned no-salt-added diced tomatoes
- 1 medium red bell pepper
- ½ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- ⅓ cup pitted Kalamata olives, quartered
- 1 tablespoon red-wine vinegar
- ¾ cup crumbled feta cheese
- Chopped fresh dill and oregano, for garnish



Source: [Eating Well](#)

1. Position rack in upper third of oven; preheat to 400 degrees F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with foil.
2. Cut each eggplant in half lengthwise. Using a spoon, scoop out flesh from the halves, leaving about 1/2-inch border on the sides and bottoms. Coarsely chop the flesh and set aside.
3. Drizzle the insides of the eggplant shells evenly with 1 tablespoon oil. Place the shells, cut-side up, on the prepared baking sheet and roast until tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from oven and increase oven temperature to broil.
4. While the eggplant roasts, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook, stirring often, until softened, 3 to 4 minutes. Add tomato paste, cumin, and garlic; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add tomatoes, bell pepper and the reserved chopped eggplant; cook, stirring occasionally, until the eggplant is tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in parsley, olives and vinegar.
5. Divide the filling evenly among the eggplant shells; top each with 3 tablespoons feta. Broil until the cheese is melted and golden, 6 to 8 minutes. Sprinkle with fresh oregano and dill, if desired.

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..a heel pain recurrence. If you have very tight calf muscles, I recommend the following:

- Use the Achilles splint you received at our office at least three times a week for 30 minutes or at least do static stretches daily. The length of time of these stretches is important. Each stretch should be held for at least 30 seconds.
- If you're a runner, hiker, or involved in other sports, you'll also need to do dynamic stretching instead of static stretches before you work out. These will help prepare your muscles for activity and reduce your risk for injury, including plantar fasciitis. Static stretches should be done after your workout.



### Keep Your Feet Strong

Towel curls can help strengthen your feet while seated, and with your feet on a towel, scrunch up the towel with your foot and your toes while your heel stays planted. Repeat 15 to 20 times with each foot for two to three sets.



### Buy The Right Shoes

It's important to purchase stable shoes, that support your arch, help keep your feet in the right alignment, and are designed for the particular sport you engage in.

I've written an eBook called "How to Buy Shoes to Prevent Plantar Fasciitis". You'll find lots of recommendations for specific

shoes in that book.

Here are some recommendations for buying running and athletic shoes that are also useful for buying any shoe.

- **Go to a reputable running store**—stores that specialize in running shoes. will know a lot more about fitting your feet properly than stores that do not. Be sure to bring your orthotics with you when you go.
- **Go shopping later in the day**—feet are most likely to swell at the end of the day. Shopping later in the day will prevent you from buying shoes that are too small.
- **Get your feet measured**—get your feet measured to make sure that your size hasn't changed. There should be at least one thumbs width between the tip of your big toe and the end of the shoe.
- **Test your shoes for stability**—shoes should bend at the ball, not in the middle, be difficult to twist from side to side, and have a firm heel counter.
- **Replace worn-out shoes**—shoes should be replaced every 400 to 500 miles or they may not keep your feet stable.



### Shoes To Avoid

While it's important to know how to find a supportive shoe, it's equally important to know what shoes to avoid.

- Flat shoes—provide no support. Find a shoe with a good arch.
- Flip flops—avoid wearing flip flops for extended walks. Use for the pool and beach only.
- Flexible shoes—these shoes feel good, but also provide little or no support.
- High heels —high heels shorten your calf muscle and put greater stress on the plantar fascia.



## June is National Men's Health Month

Father's Day isn't the only important event for men in June—it's also National Men's Health Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the health challenges men face.

While men are at greater risk than women for several serious health conditions, only 60 percent visit the doctor for an annual check-up. Forty percent wait until a problem becomes serious before they seek help.



We encounter this daily. Men frequently ignore symptoms like ingrown toenails, heel pain, or a foot ulcer until the discomfort becomes unbearable. However, addressing these issues early can prevent infections, reduce pain more effectively, and sometimes even save a limb.

### Recommendations for Men

- Choose a Primary Care Provider: Schedule an annual check-up to stay on top of your health.
- Get Appropriate Screening Tests: Based on your age, lifestyle, and family history, consider the following screenings: lung cancer screening if you smoke or have smoked and are over 55, prostate cancer ages 40-50, depending on your risk factors, colon cancer at age 50 or earlier if you're at high risk, and regular checks for cholesterol, high blood pressure, and Type II diabetes
- Eat Healthily: A balanced diet can help prevent or manage chronic conditions.
- Stay Active: Regular physical activity is crucial for maintaining overall health.

Taking these steps can lead to a longer, healthier life, allowing you to enjoy more Father's Days and all the moments in between. So this June, take charge of your health and encourage the men in your life to do the same.

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—Dr. Rion Berg

