



## Common Foot Problems

Most of us spend a large part of our waking day on our feet. At The Wye Physiotherapy Practice we see a lot of patients with painful aching feet. It is important to look after your feet as to date there are no foot transplants available! If you think you may suffer from any of these conditions Physiotherapy can help, we have a number of treatment modalities for these problems.

**PLANTAR FASCITIS** is a condition affecting the connective tissue that binds the sole of the foot together maintaining the natural arches. These tissues can become inflamed causing the bottom of the foot to feel painful when pressed or on walking and standing. Going out for a long days shopping in shoes that do not cushion the sole of the foot or may be too flat can cause this problem. Poor foot posture can also put an uneven strain on the sole of the foot. At our clinic we treat this condition with ultrasound, this helps to speed the body's natural healing response. The sole of the foot can be taped in a shortened position to relieve the pain and enable the natural walking pattern to resume. It is important to maintain the length of the tendons running under the foot and stretches are practised on a daily basis.

**CALCANEAL SPURS** are bony outgrowths from the heel bone usually as a response to a continued or repetitive pressure hence the name "postman's heel". These are very painful when pressed but do improve with electrotherapy treatment and pads placed in the heel of the shoe.

**METATARSALGIA** affects the joints at the base of the toes. The heads of the bones tend to drop and undue pressure is put on them when walking. This can be helped by exercises to strengthen the small muscles of the foot and the use of a support in the shoe. Exercises to improve the strength of the muscles supporting the foot are important.

**FLAT FEET** happen as a result of the long arches of the foot collapsing down so that virtually all the sole of your foot is in contact with the floor. This can cause pain under the ball of the foot owing to the increased pressure. Wearing good quality well fitting shoes can help the problem. When standing keep your toes in contact with the floor but try to shift your weight to the outside border of your foot. This helps nicely to raise the arches.