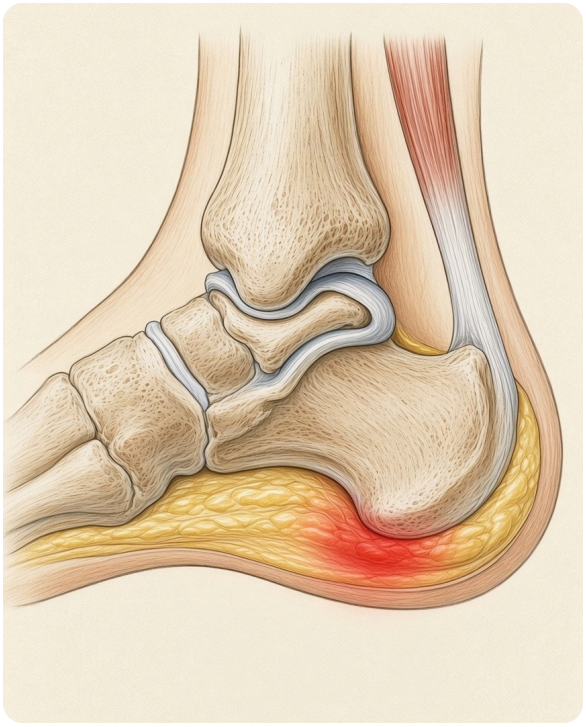
ARMIN PHYSIO



PATIENT GUIDE

Heel Fat Pad Syndrome

Pain directly under your heel? It could be **heel fat pad syndrome.**

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What is heel fat pad syndrome?

Under your heel bone is a thick cushion of fat that absorbs impact every time you step. Heel fat pad syndrome happens when this cushioning tissue becomes irritated or loses some of its ability to absorb impact. It causes a deep, bruise-like pain right in the centre of the heel. Reducing excessive impact, supportive footwear and gradually strengthening the foot and ankle can help manage it.

QUICK CHECK

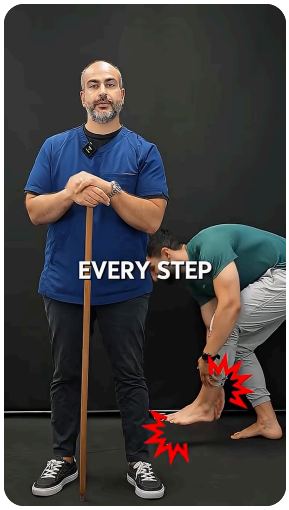
Does this sound like you?

- [ ] Pain in the heel **when you squeeze it**
- [ ] Sharp pain in the heel **with every step**
- [ ] Deep, **bruise-like** pain in the **centre of the heel**
- [ ] Worse with **long standing or walking**
- [ ] More pain on **hard surfaces**

If you ticked a few boxes, your heel fat pad could be irritated. Try the 3 exercises on the next pages.



Pain when the heel is squeezed



Sharp heel pain with every step

YOUR 3 EXERCISES

Try these exercises

1 Towel curl

Strengthens the small foot muscles that lift your arch





1. **Place the towel on the ground.**
2. **Place your feet on top of the towel.**
3. **Curl the towel up**, increasing that medial arch.
4. Relax and repeat.

3 sets of 10–15 reps, slow and controlled

From Armin's video description

Stop if you feel sharp pain, pain that goes above about 4/10 or keeps building, or pain that lingers into the next day.

2 Ball-squeeze heel raise

Works your tibialis posterior, a key muscle that supports your arch





1. **Place the ball between the ankles.**
2. **Squeeze the ball in together.**
3. **Try to lift up**, preferably going on the **outsides of the feet**.
4. This will work your **tibialis posterior muscle**. Lower slowly and repeat.

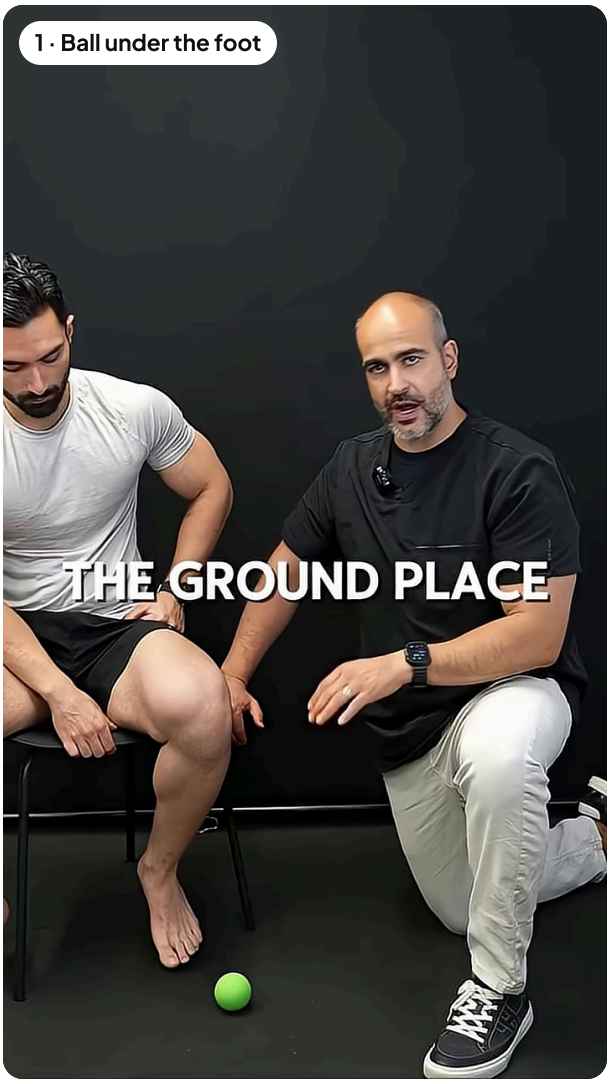
3 sets of 10–15 reps, slow and controlled

From Armin's video description

Stop if you feel sharp pain, pain that goes above about 4/10 or keeps building, or pain that lingers into the next day.

3 Massage ball foot roll

Increases mobility in the foot bones and improves circulation





1. **Grab a massage ball** like so and place it on the ground.
2. **Place your foot on the ball.**
3. **Gently roll back and forth.** Don’t put too much pressure. **Don’t go to pain.**
4. This will help increase mobility in the foot bones and improve circulation.

Roll for **about 1 minute** per foot, light pressure

Suggested

Stop if you feel sharp pain, pain that goes above about 4/10 or keeps building, or pain that lingers into the next day.

DAILY ROUTINE · ABOUT 10 MINUTES

Put it together

01
Strengthen
Towel curl, 3 × 10–15

02
Strengthen
Ball-squeeze heel raise, 3 × 10–15

03
Mobilize
Massage ball roll, about 1 min per foot

3 sets of 10–15, slow and controlled, is from Armin's video description. The rolling time and doing it once a day are suggestions. Wear supportive shoes and limit long periods on hard surfaces. Suggested: mild discomfort up to about **4/10** is OK. Don't push through significant pain.

Stop the exercise if you notice

- Sharp, stabbing pain in the foot or heel
- Pain above about 4/10, or pain that keeps building as you go
- **Tingling or numbness** that gets worse during the exercise
- Pain that's **worse the next morning**

If an exercise keeps causing these, stop it and get assessed.

SAFETY FIRST

Get checked right away if you have

- You **can't put weight on the foot** or take 4 steps after a fall or injury
- Pain or tenderness **right on a bone** after an injury
- A **hot, red, swollen** foot, especially with **fever** or feeling unwell
- **Calf pain, swelling or redness**, especially with shortness of breath
- **Numbness**, tingling or weakness that's spreading or getting worse
- A foot wound, colour change or numbness if you have **diabetes**

Calf swelling with shortness of breath or chest pain needs **911**. If you can't bear weight after an injury, or have a hot swollen foot with fever, **go to the nearest emergency department**. For the others, see a doctor promptly. If your foot isn't improving after a few weeks, **book an assessment**.

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NEED MORE HELP?

Book an assessment with Armin

In clinic or virtually. See current options and times at the link.

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Disclaimer: This handout is for education only. It is not a diagnosis or medical advice and does not replace an assessment by a qualified health professional. If you're unsure whether these exercises are right for you, check with your physiotherapist or doctor first.

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