

Get a Jump on Heel Pain & Sports



Sports activities are an exciting and healthy part of life. Sometimes, sports that include jarring starts and stops, or sports that are performed on uneven surfaces, can lead to heel pain. The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) in cooperation with the American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine (AAPSM) offer five sports most likely to contribute to heel pain and steps you can take to prevent it from occurring.

American Podiatric
Medical Association

9312 Old Georgetown Road
Bethesda, MD 20814

Telephone:
301.571.9200
800.FOOTCARE

Facsimile:
301.530.2752

www.apma.org

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Problem</u>	<u>Solution</u>
Running	Pain in the arch and bottom of the heel can be caused by both short and long distance running.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose the correct shoe for running, short or long distances, this can prevent most pain. Try over-the-counter insoles, they can sometimes help to relieve pain by providing cushion and shock absorption. Custom orthotics help many runners. Replace worn shoes every 350-500 miles.
Walking & Hiking	Walking and hiking may irritate a Haglund's deformity, which is a bump on the back of the heel bone where the Achilles tendon attaches. It can become larger or inflamed over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wearing shoes or boots with stiff heel counters can irritate the heel bone, especially on steep uphill. Selecting a shoe with a lower or softer heel counter may relieve pain. Using heel lifts and custom orthotics can reposition the heel and reduce irritation.
Kickboxing & Aerobics	Acute or traumatic pain in the arch of the foot and bottom of the heel can develop due to the high impact of these activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus stretching the Achilles tendon both before and after activity. Consult a podiatrist immediately if sudden heel, arch or ankle pain is experienced.
Tennis	Tennis may cause pain on the outer sides of the heel due to body positioning during play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase stretching at the first signs of heel pain. Include stretching the hamstrings. Using insoles and custom molded orthotic devices available from a podiatric physician can help.
Basketball	Basketball, as well as other jarring sports, can cause stress fractures and pain on the bottom, back and sides of the heel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-top shoes can help to keep the foot stable. Stretch the entire leg and foot before playing. Heel lifts and custom foot orthoses can prevent pain or provide relief.

To find an APMA member podiatrist in your area, visit www.apma.org/heelpain

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