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the WELLNESS letter

presented by Meridian Wellness

A royal pain in the...foot.

A primer on plantar fasciitis.

What is Plantar Fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis refers to an inflammation of the plantar fascia, a thick, fibrous band running along the sole of the foot. Such inflammation results from direct injury to the plantar fascia, usually, repeated trauma to the tissue where the fascia attaches to the calcaneus or heel bone. The plantar fascia is critical in maintaining the foot's complex arch system, also playing a role in balance and fine control of certain phases of the athlete's gait.

Injury to the plantar fascia is particularly painful and disabling for runners and can often prove stubbornly resistant to treatment. Rehabilitation is frequently a lengthy and frustrating process. For these reasons, care should be taken where possible to avoid such injury by means of preventative exercises and sensitivity to early warning signs.

What causes Plantar Fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis generally occurs over time, rather than being the result of a single event. Micro trauma from repetitive stress to the tissue often combines with a biomechanical deficiency of the foot to produce the condition. In addition, arthritic and metabolic factors may contribute to the development of this injury. If the level of damage to the plantar fascia is significant, an inflammatory reaction of the heel bone can produce spike-



like projections of new bone, known as heel spurs. Indeed, plantar fasciitis has occasionally been referred to as heel spur syndrome, though such spurs are not the cause of the initial pain but are instead a further symptom of the problem. While such spurs are sometimes painless, in other cases they cause pain or disability in the athlete, and surgical intervention to remove them may be required. A dull, intermittent pain in the heel is typical, sometimes progressing to a sharp, sustained discomfort.

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EASY STEPS TO PREVENT PLANTAR FASCIITIS



Plantar Rolling: Place a small tin can or tennis ball under the arch of the affected foot. Slowly move the foot back and forth allowing the tin can or tennis ball to roll around under the arch. This activity will help to stretch, strengthen and massage the affected area.



Toe Walking: Stand upright in bare feet and rise up onto the toes and front of the foot. Balance in this position and walk forward in slow, small steps. Maintain an upright, balanced posture, staying as high as possible with each step. Complete three sets of the exercise, with a short break in between sets, for a total of 20 meters.



Also don't forget to warm-up properly, avoid activities that cause pain and wear proper fitting footwear and arch supports.

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What's new at Meridian Wellness?

Drs. Keith Tse & Misa Kawasaki are pleased to announce the arrival of their baby girl, *Calleigh*, who was born on April 29th! She is a happy, healthy bundle of joy and weighed in at 6lbs, 13 oz.



Dr. Marni Ross, ND will be covering for Dr. Misa while she is on maternity leave.



We are happy to introduce **Giovanna Capozza, RHN** to the Meridian Wellness team. Giovanna is a holistic nutritionist and allergist who uses *Bioenergetic Intolerance Elimination™* to help allergy and food intolerance sufferers overcome their symptoms 85% of the time after just one session!

The Meridian Wellness team participated at the **2007 Aurora Home Show** in April where we had an opportunity to meet and talk with our neighbours in the Richmond Hill, Aurora and Newmarket communities. We look

forward to seeing people at the upcoming **Oak Ridges Home Show & Family Fair on June 16th!**

Looking to do your part in saving the environment? Meridian Wellness carries **Sol-U-Guard Botanical Disinfectant powered by essential thyme oil**. Its broad spectrum formula kills bacteria, mold, fungus and even HIV-1 and is even approved by Health Canada to be used in daycare centres.



fennel to their diets to help alleviate the cramping associated with monthly menstrual cycles. In a study published in the International Journal of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, researchers concluded "the essence of fennel can be used as a safe and effective herbal drug for primary dysmenorrhea."

Coriander - This simple humble spice has been documented as a traditional treatment of diabetes according to English researchers. The coriander demonstrated insulin-releasing and insulin-like activity in their study published in the British Journal of Nutrition.

Whenever possible, opt for fresh herbs as opposed to dried. Fresh herbs retain more flavor and nutrients. To get the maximum benefit from your dried spices, it's important to keep them fresh. That means tossing out any that haven't been used in the last year. Also, if your spice rack is above the stove, consider moving it to another wall and keep it out of direct sunlight as well. Overcooking food can also dilute a spice's benefits.

spice up your health!

If you're using your spice rack as a decorative wall hanging and don't know your cumin from your coriander, it's time to spice up your life! In addition to enhancing the flavor of food, many herbs and spices have well-researched health benefits.

Garlic - a little bad breath is a small price to pay for the powerful health benefits of this pungent spice. Recent research reveals that garlic lowers blood pressure and blood fats. It's

also a natural antiviral, antifungal and antibacterial agent. In addition, researchers also note that garlic may reduce the risk of several cancers. The secret ingredient in garlic is allicin, which gives it the characteristic taste and odor. Researchers found that it's the allicin that actually inhibits the growth of cancer cells.

Oregano - bountiful in antioxidants, oregano has long been used in food preservation

and in traditional medicine for the treatment of common ailments. Recently a study published showed that oregano can help with "oxidation-linked diseases, such as diabetes." It appears that rosmarinic acid, a principle component of oregano, may slow the starch-to glucose conversion rate, "which could contribute to the management of hyperglycemia and diabetes complications in the long term."

Turmeric - used extensively in Indian and Asian cuisine, receives its yellow color from a potent health boosting component known as curcumin. Studies show that curcumin may prevent a vast array of cancers including prostate, breast and skin cancer. Curcumin also lowers total cholesterol while boosting "good" HDL cholesterol. Finally, turmeric is also an all-natural anti-inflammatory by activating the COX-2 gene (similar to Vioxx and Celebrex, without the side effects).

Cayenne Pepper - This hot spice packs a zinger -- and not only for your taste buds. Cayenne and other hot peppers have been shown to improve mood. In addition, the spice may reduce pain and inflammation when applied topically.

Fennel - instead of risking the potentially dangerous side effects of drugs, women can add a little



HELP US HELP OTHERS!

Referrals are important to us in serving the local Richmond Hill/Aurora community! You probably know someone close who could benefit from the care we provide at Meridian Wellness. A word or two about the services we provide could profoundly change a life!



getting back on course:

THE LATEST ADVANCES IN TREATING SPORTS INJURIES

With warm weather on the way, many of us are gearing up for golf season, baseball leagues, soccer games and tennis tournaments at the club. If you have a nagging injury that still has not gone away in the off-season, there's hope in sight! **BIOFLEX low intensity laser therapy** is one of the latest advances in sports medicine and is used by pro athletes in the treatment of acute and chronic injuries. Essentially, low powered light energy at specific wavelengths applied over an injury site can stimulate quicker healing times! Instead of masking symptoms like most other therapies do, low intensity

laser actually heals tissue and gets at the source of the problem. Combined with proper active exercise rehabilitation, laser therapy can get you back in the game quickly.

Use what pro athletes like Lance Armstrong, Damon Allen, Mark McGwire, Donovan Bailey, and the Toronto Raptors and Miami Heat sports teams use. **Inquire about BIOFLEX laser therapy at Meridian Wellness!**

FOCUS ON KIDS:

How to get your kids to exercise

IT'S BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO PRY CHILDREN AWAY FROM COMPUTERS, TELEVISIONS AND VIDEO GAMES. HOWEVER, PARENTS SHOULD DO WHATEVER THEY CAN TO ENCOURAGE THEIR CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL ACTIVITY. HERE ARE A FEW TIPS ON HOW TO MOTIVATE YOUNGSTERS TO EXERCISE AND ADOPT HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHANGES.

1) Encourage walking to school. The 5 minute drive to school would be a great 20 minute session of physical activity. To and from school...that adds up to a lot of burned calories over the course of a week, month and year!



2) Lead by example. If you opt to take the stairs instead of the elevator, your children will follow suit. Rather than just urging you kids to go outside to play, initiate family bike rides or walks.

3) Turn off the tube. Limit the time they your child can spend in front of the TV, computer or Xbox. And get theTVs out of their bedroom!

4) Give them a sporting chance. Being involved in sports is a great way for youngsters to get in shape while having fun and sharing time with friends. Expose them to several sports and allow them to choose those that they are most interested in.

5) Healthy Competition. A little healthy competition can maintain children's interest in exercise...even when they are merely competing against themselves. To

facilitate accountability, encourage them to keep an exercise log and use it to track progress and set future exercise goals. Maybe even include a reward when goals are met!

Quote of the Month

“ Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do. ”

JOHN WOODEN, UCLA COACHING LEGEND



GOOD NEWS FOR YOUR BACK

A recent study published in *Surgical Neurology* indicates that omega-3 fatty acids found in fish oil may be just as effective as NSAIDs in treating pain, without causing the same side effects. In this study, scientists evaluated 250 patients who were suffering from nonsurgical neck pain or back pain, and who were taking NSAIDs for pain relief. The patients were asked to take 2,400 milligrams of omega-3 supplements per day for two weeks, and then to reduce the dosage to 1,200 milligrams daily. Approximately one month after starting supplementation, more than half of the patients (59 percent) reported they had discontinued using NSAIDs for pain control; 60 percent said their overall pain levels had improved; and 80 percent stated that they were satisfied with the improvement in pain. No adverse side effects were reported.

As the results of this study show, omega-3 fatty acids appear just as effective as NSAIDs, if not more so, in relieving certain kinds of neck and back pain.

plantar fasciitis cont'd:

Commonly, pain is worse in the morning or after sitting, later decreasing as you begin walking. After a brief period of walking, the pain usually subsides, but returns again either with vigorous activity or prolonged standing or walking. Certain preconditions favor the development of plantar fasciitis.

These include genetic predisposition, excessive rigidity in the feet, overly high arches, (or by contrast, flat feet), and running on the toes or in very soft surfaces such as sand. Finally, improper footwear, particularly with insufficient arch support, is a recipe for injury.

Treatment

Treatment of plantar fasciitis is sometimes a drawn out and frustrating process. A program of rehabilitation should be undertaken with the help of someone qualified and knowledgeable about the affliction. Typically, plantar fasciitis will require at least six weeks and up to six months of conservative care to be fully remedied. Fortunately, with rehab technology like ultrasound and more recently, the use of low intensity laser, musculoskeletal conditions like plantar fasciitis can be resolved quickly. Combined with flexibility, strength and balance training for the foot and ankle, a full recovery can be achieved in due time.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
REHABILITATION & WELLNESS CARE
OR TO SEE IF WE ARE RIGHT FOR YOU

CALL **905.773.5794** OR
VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.MERIDIANWELLNESS.CA



13085 Yonge Street, Suite 205
Oak Ridges, ON L4E 2S8
(one light north of King Rd. in the
No Frills Plaza)
(905)773-5794

"Community Practitioners Caring for Our Community."

Dr. Keith Tse, DC CAFCI
Dr. Misa Kawasaki, ND
Dr. Marni Ross, ND
Troy Miller, RMT
Giovanna Capozza, RHN, RHA