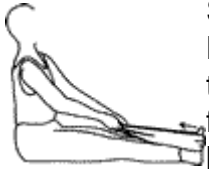




Stretching Exercises

Towel stretch:



Sit on a hard surface with the injured leg stretched out in front. Loop a towel around the ball of the foot and pull the towel toward the body, stretching the back of the calf muscle. Hold this position for 30 seconds. Repeat three times. When the towel stretch becomes too easy, begin doing the standing calf stretch.

Standing calf stretch:



Facing a wall put your hands against the wall at about eye level. Keep the injured leg back, the uninjured leg forward, and the heel of the injured leg on the floor. Turn the injured foot slightly inward (as if pigeon-toed) and slowly lean into the wall until a stretch is felt in the back of the calf. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds. Repeat three times. When able to stand comfortably on the injured foot, begin stretching the plantar fascia at the bottom of the foot.

Plantar fascia stretch:



Stand with the ball of the injured foot on a stair. Reach for the stair below with the heel until a stretch is felt in the arch of the foot. Hold this position for 30 to 60 seconds and then relax. Repeat three times.

Frozen can roll:



Roll the bare injured foot back and forth from the heel to the mid-arch over a frozen water bottle or juice can. Repeat for three to five minutes. This exercise is particularly helpful if done first thing in the morning. This exercise can also be done using a golf ball to help loosen the plantar fascia.

Towel pickup:



With the heel on the ground, pick up a towel with the toes. Release. Repeat 10 to 20 times.