

ACUPUNCTURE & ACUPRESSURE

Treatment of Plantar Fasciitis

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The protocol described in this article utilizes a combination of acupuncture needling, microcurrent and color-light treatment in conjunction with therapeutic exercise. It is a good example of a multifaceted approach to a hard-to-treat pain issue. Plantar fasciitis is a painful condition of the foot that is hard to treat because all the body weight is on the feet, preventing rest and healing. Conventional treatment involves rest, NSAIDs, ice and physical therapy. The prognosis is usually for improvement after about two months of therapy. Relief can be obtained more quickly and with better long-term resolution using a combination of microcurrents and acupuncture. The patient should notice pain relief after the first treatment, although it may be temporary. A course of three to 10 treatments, preferably two times a week, will likely provide good carry-over of relief.

Think of plantar fasciitis as a lower body condition, not just a foot condition. When the qi is coursing freely through the legs, it is unlikely this condition would develop. Needle points around the heel and proximal points on the Kidney and Urinary Bladder meridians. Plum-blossom needling can relieve pain – try tapping along the pathways of the affected meridians.

I suggest using these techniques in sequence:

Circling the Dragon – use bi-phasic polarity microcurrent to surround the painful zone by searching and treating sets of acupoints. If available, add anti-inflammatory colors of therapeutic light such as purple or blue to boost results. Color-light therapy is likely to improve the results of acupuncture or microcurrent alone.

Polarized probes - There are several very useful local-distal acupoint placements:

- + probe on proximal acupoints up leg, probe on painful foot points on related meridians. Examples: + on UB 57 and/or UB 37, on heel *ah shi* points.
- + probe on sacroiliac joint area (tender points), probe on painful heel points
- + probe on painful foot points, probe on heel of opposite hand. The Master Tung
 acupuncture method describes two very useful extra points Mu Guan and Gu Guan, tender
 points just distal to the wrist crease on the palmar aspect of the hand. You can find these
 points by palpation.

Auricular micro-macro – Using polarized probes, try placing the + probe on the painful foot areas, and the – probe (using small, wetted, auricular probe tip) on the corresponding heel point of the ear on the same side of the body.

After doing the above techniques, surround the foot with microcurrent pad electrodes, preferably interferential four-pad placement. While the current is being applied, have the patient do these exercises:

#1: Patient leans forward against a wall with one knee straight and heel on the ground. The other knee is bent. The heel cord and foot arch stretch while the patient is leaning. Hold for 10 seconds,

relax and straighten up. Repeat 20 times for each sore heel.

#2: Lean forward onto a countertop, spreading feet apart with one foot in front of the other. Flex knees and squat down, keeping heels on the ground as long as possible. The heel cords and foot arches will stretch as the heels come up in the stretch. Hold for 10 seconds, relax and straighten up. Repeat 20 times.

This is a prime example of the power of stretching and mobilization with simultaneous microcurrent. This form of combination therapy can be applied anywhere on the body that rehabilitation and neuromuscular healing is needed and will greatly accelerate the process.

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