

Subject: Plantar Fasciitis Release Surgery		Original Effective Date: 4/5/21
Policy Number: MCP-402	Revision Date(s):	
MCPC Approval Date: 4/5/21	Review Date:	

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DISCLAIMER

This Molina clinical policy is intended to facilitate the Utilization Management process. It expresses Molina's determination as to whether certain services or supplies are medically necessary, experimental, investigational, or cosmetic for purposes of determining appropriateness of payment. The conclusion that a particular service or supply is medically necessary does not constitute a representation or warranty that this service or supply is covered (i.e., will be paid for by Molina) for a particular member. The member's benefit plan determines coverage. Each benefit plan defines which services are covered, which are excluded, and which are subject to dollar caps or other limits. Members and their providers will need to consult the member's benefit plan to determine if there are any exclusion(s) or other benefit limitations applicable to this service or supply. If there is a discrepancy between this policy and a member's plan of benefits, the benefits plan will govern. In addition, coverage may be mandated by applicable legal requirements of a State, the Federal government or CMS for Medicare and Medicaid members. CMS's Coverage Database can be found on the CMS website. The coverage directive(s) and criteria from an existing National Coverage Determination (NCD) or Local Coverage Determination (LCD) will supersede the contents of this Molina clinical policy document and provide the directive for all Medicare members.¹

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURE/SERVICE/PHARMACEUTICAL

Plantar fasciitis is defined as the inflammation of the plantar fascia which is the thick connective tissue that lies between the heel bone and the base of the toes. Degeneration and inflammation of the plantar fascia caused by repetitive micro trauma leads to chronic heel pain. The characteristic symptom of plantar fasciitis is heel pain, which is usually localized to the plantar medial aspect of the heel. Pain is typically worse in the morning or after a rest period but improves with movement. A diagnosis of plantar fasciitis is made primarily through clinical history and physical examination. Plantar fasciitis is primarily treated medically, and up to 95% of patients have symptom resolution within 12 to 18 months.

Current medical management of plantar fasciitis includes stretching exercises of the foot and calf, avoiding the use of flat shoes and barefoot walking, using prefabricated over-the-counter silicone heel shoe inserts, limiting physical activities such as running, jumping, dancing etc. that can aggravate the condition, short term use of NSAIDS, and injection of the plantar region with glucocorticoids and a local anesthetic. Electric Shock Wave Therapy may be considered as an alternative to surgical treatment. Surgery should only be considered for intractable pain which has not responded to 6–12 months of conservative medical treatment. Open and endoscopic partial plantar fascial release are the most common surgical interventions utilized for the treatment of plantar fasciitis when all other medical management has failed. The open procedure enables the first branch of the lateral plantar nerve to be directly decompressed if necessary and this cannot be done using an endoscopic approach. The endoscopic procedure is less invasive, less painful, has fewer complications, and has a quicker recovery time in comparison to the open procedure.

POSITION STATEMENT CRITERIA ⁶⁻⁴⁴

Plantar Fascia release surgery [open or endoscopic] may be considered medically necessary when all of the following criteria are met: [ALL]

- ☐ Diagnosis of plantar fasciitis; and
- ☐ Age 18 or older; and
- ☐ Baseline imaging to exclude other pathological etiologies of heel pain (e.g., achilles tendinopathy, arthritis, heel fat pad atrophy, tarsal tunnel syndrome, calcaneal stress fracture, bone lesions, heel spur or infection); and
- ☐ Significant heel pain and functional impairment interfering with activities of daily living that persist after at least 6 months of applicable conservative management that includes but is not limited to the following: [ALL]
 - Physical therapy \geq 6 months; and
 - Activity modification \geq 6 months; and
 - Night splints \geq 4 weeks; and
 - Foot orthotics (e.g., shoe inserts, heel lifts, footgear modifications, corrective splinting) \geq 6 months; and
 - Oral analgesics or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) unless contraindicated or not tolerated; and
 - Corticosteroid injections unless contraindicated or not tolerated; and
 - Home stretching program; and
 - Taping

SUMMARY OF MEDICAL EVIDENCE

The peer reviewed medical literature has an abundance of low-moderate quality evidence for the use of open and endoscopic partial plantar fascial release as a treatment for intractable plantar fasciitis that has not responded to conservative treatment. The majority of evidence consists of case series, non-randomized clinical studies and retrospective reviews. Despite the lack of robust studies, plantar fascial release surgical treatment has become the standard of care for intractable pain lasting 6-12 months that has failed medical management. ^{8-9, 22, 23, 26, 28, 40, 43}

There is an abundance of good quality evidence in the peer reviewed literature for the use of conservative medical therapy as a first and second line treatment for plantar fasciitis. There are several randomized controlled trials, retrospective reviews, case series and professional society guidelines. First line treatments include stretching exercises, ice, activity modification, weight loss in obesity, footwear modifications, arch taping, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications and

shock-absorbing shoe inserts or orthoses. Second line therapy includes night splints, steroidal anti-inflammatory injections or casting. ^{2-5, 6-7, 11, 14, 16, 19, 27, 29, 30, 33, 35, 36, 42}

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY GUIDELINES ²⁻⁵

The American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS) practice guideline (2010) indicates that first line treatment options for plantar heel pain associated with plantar fasciitis include foot padding and strapping, therapeutic orthotic insoles, cortisone injections, and Achilles and plantar fascia stretching for a period of six weeks. Second line treatment options include continuation of tier one treatments, with consideration for additional therapies, including the use of night splints to maintain an extended length of the plantar fascia and gastrocnemius complex. The guideline recommends that ESWT may be considered as an alternative to traditional surgical approaches for recalcitrant plantar heel pain. ³

CODING INFORMATION: THE CODES LISTED IN THIS POLICY ARE FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY. LISTING OF A SERVICE OR DEVICE CODE IN THIS POLICY DOES NOT IMPLY THAT THE SERVICE DESCRIBED BY THIS CODE IS COVERED OR NON-COVERED. COVERAGE IS DETERMINED BY THE BENEFIT DOCUMENT. THIS LIST OF CODES MAY NOT BE ALL INCLUSIVE.

CPT	Description
28008	Fasciotomy, foot and/or toe
28060	Fasciectomy, plantar fascia; partial (separate procedure)
28062	Fasciectomy, plantar fascia; radical (separate procedure)
28119	Osteotomy, calcaneus; for spur, with or without plantar fascial release
28250	Division of plantar fascia and muscle (eg, Steindler stripping) (separate procedure)
29893	Endoscopic plantar fasciotomy

HCPCS	Description
	N/A

ICD-10	Description: [For dates of service on or after 10/01/2015]
M72.2	Plantar fascial fibromatosis

REFERENCES

Government Agency

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Medicare Coverage Database. National coverage determination (NCD) Search. Accessed at: <http://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/>

Professional Society Guidelines

- American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM). Ankle and Foot Disorders. Effective Sept 2015. [archived]. <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dwc/MTUS/ACOEM-Guidelines/Ankle-and-Foot-Disorders-Guideline.pdf>
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Peer Reviewed Publications

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 - Plantar Fascial Release.

REVIEW REVISION HISTORY

4/5/2021: New Policy