

# PLANTAR FASCITIS

## THE BENEFITS OF MASSAGE FOR PLANTAR FASCITIS

The tenth of the Perfect Spots is one of the most popular of the lot, and right under your feet — literally. It lies in the center of the arch muscles of the foot. This is one of the Perfect Spots that everyone knows about. No massage is complete without a foot massage!

### Why is the arch of the foot a Perfect Spot for a massage?

It isn't difficult to understand why the arch muscles of the foot would harbour a Perfect Spot for massage. They are, after all, the hardest working muscles in the human body. Our feet absorb an incredible amount of punishment, yet usually feel no worse than just stiff and tired. Injury here is common, but not nearly as common as you might expect.

The arch of the foot is a fascinating structure. The arch is like a bow without an arrow, and its curved shape is created by a “string” of muscles and elastic connective tissues. Every time you take a step, your weight pushes down on the arch. It doesn't collapse because of an artful combination of bone shape, springy ligaments, long “stirrupt” tendons from leg muscles ... and the arch muscles. The arch muscles of the foot itself don't actually “kick in” until you reach quite heavy loads: about 181 kilograms. Although that sounds like quite a lot, loading may spike that high in an average person with every step. We don't have muscles there for nothing, of course! (The biggest arch supporter is probably the tibialis posterior, deep in the calf. And the tibialis anterior is another one — and it also has a perfect spot for massage, no. 3). Still, the forces on all of these structures are relentless and often very large — no wonder they get exhausted!

When these support mechanisms fail, the connective tissue in the arch may start to degenerate and fray — a kind of tendonitis called plantar fasciitis. However, many people just develop really significant muscle knots in the arch, and in other arch supporting muscles.

There is another reason why this spot is significant. The skin of the feet has a disproportionate number of nerve endings, like the face and the hands, yet the feet are generally abused or at least neglected. Therefore the sensations of foot massage seem particularly rich and diverse in contrast to the usual stomp, stomp, stomp of their daily stimulus.

### How do you find muscle knots in the arch of the foot?

Not only is this probably the most perfect of all Perfect Spots, but it is also perfectly easy to find: it is exactly in the center of the bottom of the foot, halfway between the heel and the ball, and halfway between the inside and outside edges (perhaps slightly closer to the inside).

The arch muscles generally feel best when pressed on an angle, for example towards the outside of the foot. But this is a minor point: any angle will do.

### What does massaging the arch of the foot feel like?

You will know it when you feel it! Having massaged thousands of people and thousands of feet, I can tell you without hesitation that the center of the arch muscles is a popular, “feel good” spot. It usually produces a clear, sweet ache with mild to moderate thumb pressure only.

Note that despite its popularity, Perfect Spot No. 10 usually does not cause any *referred sensation* — that's the satisfying, spreading ache that is often associated with other significant trigger points. Don't take the lack of referred sensation to mean that what you're doing isn't working!

All massage feels better when someone else does it, but this is especially true of foot massage. Although it is easy to massage your own foot (and highly recommended if you have no other choice), receiving a foot massage is one of life's truly delicious experiences, the apple pie à la mode of touch.

For more information check out the rest of the website: <http://saveyourself.ca/articles/spot-10-foot-arch.php>