HEEL PAIN

- The heel bone or calcaneus is the largest bone in the foot and bears all of the body's weight with each step.
- It projects backward beyond the leg bones to provide a useful lever for the muscles of the calf.
- Stress placed on the heel bone and its associated structures is tremendous and makes it susceptible to plantar fasciitis (Plantar fascia being the long band of fiber attached to the bottom of the heel bone, helping create the arch of the foot) or heel spur syndrome.

HEEL SPUR SYNDROME/PLANTAR FASCIITIS

- The pain that results from these disorders is caused by inflammation at the interface of the plantar fascia and heel bone.
- Plantar fasciitis and heel spur syndrome are usually the result of biomechanical faults, such as flexible flatfeet, high-ached foot deformities and tight Achilles tendon.
- Other causes of stress on the heel and plantar fascia include recent weight gain, high-impact athletic activities, prolonged standing or walking, trauma, lower back problems, mircrotraumatic fracture of the heel and arthritis.
- Not all heel spurs hurt.

CONSERVATIVE TREATMENT

- Treatment is directed at reducing stress on the plantar fascia and decreasing inflammation at the attachment of the plantar fascia.
- Conservative treatment usually involves rest, heel cups, stretching, physical therapy modalities, strapping, orthotics, steroidal injections and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications.
- In a minority of cases, when these conservative treatments fail, surgical intervention becomes necessary.

SURGICAL TREATMENT

- The plantar fascia is released in part from its origin.
- When a large spur is present, reduction or removal could become necessary.
- Advances in surgical technology now permit plantar fascial release via the endoscope/Endoscopic Plantar Fascial Release.
- Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy is also a new modality that is available.
- Your podiatrist will help guide you as to the manner of treatment that is best suited.
- There may be additional methods of treatment for this common foot problem. Your podiatrist will discuss these with you.