

Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT or SWT) - FAQ

Frequently asked Questions

Q: Will Shockwave Therapy help my plantar fasciitis (or other pathology)?

A: SWT has been well researched and has been very successful in the treatment of a large number of common injuries. The success rate for many problems where SWT can be applied incl. plantar fasciitis is between 80 – 90 %. Every situation is different and it is very important to thoroughly assess your situation and to diagnose the problem. After this assessment it is possible to say whether SWT will help your condition.

Q: Have you had good success?

A: SWT has been around for over 30 years. We have successfully used it in our Queensland locations over several years with many patients finding relieve for the first time.

Q: How does shockwave therapy work?

A: SWT uses acoustic waves produced in a machine and transmitted to the injury area via a hand piece and applicator. These acoustic waves significantly increased blood circulation, which is important for tissues to heal. In repetitive strain injuries there is an ongoing injury/healing cycle without a full recovery of the involved structures. The shockwaves will establish the basis for the healing of the tissues by starting an inflammatory process in the body. They basically help the body to heal itself. It is important to also address and treat the underlying causes of the problem also. If not, healing may not occur, or the problem may return.

Q: How many sessions do I need to get better?

A: It is not possible to predict to number of treatment sessions with SWT needed to achieve the desired outcome. It depends greatly on the severity of the condition, how long it has been around for, what other underlying causes there are, what else has been done thus far to treat the condition.

The average number of treatments necessary to get patients pain free that ie: presented with plantar fasciitis is 8. This is based on the research over the past 20 – 30 years. (other conditions will require different number of sessions on average)

Some patients may need fewer sessions, while others may need more. It is important to first thoroughly assess your situation. There may be underlying causes, which have led to the development of your plantar fasciitis (other pathologies) in the first place. All underlying causes need to be treated, together with the application of SWT, to be successful.

Q: How often do I have to be treated per week?

A: Treatment, SWT application is 2 x per week over 3-4 weeks initially. Some patients will respond to the treatment faster than others with the same injury.

Q: I have had physiotherapy/Podiatry/chiro/acupuncture/exercises before; can I still get shockwave treatment?

A: Yes, all these therapies may have a role to play and we will provide a combination of muscle, joint mobilization incl. acupuncture in addition to SWT if it is indicated.

Q: I did have cortisone injections before. Can I still get SWT?

A: Yes, but since the cortisone weakens the tendon material we have to wait 2 weeks until after the injection before SWT can be applied. All other parts of the treatment can be provided already.

Q: Does the treatment hurt?

A: Since we are applying the SWT to the injured areas, there may be some tenderness/pain during the treatment. You may also have some discomfort/pain up to 48 hours after the treatment. In most cases there are no effects like this and there is even an immediate improvement of the symptoms after the treatment. It is advised to not take anti-inflammatory medication after the treatment. If you feel the need for pain relief please use panadol. Also please do not apply ice after the treatment. This would interfere with the desired cellular effects.

Q: Can I continue going to the gym/running/walking?

A: Strenuous activities should be laid off for 48 hours after the treatment with SWT.

Q: How much are the treatments?

A: Our standard fee for physiotherapy is \$89. SWT requires a small co-payment per treatment. If you have a private Health Care Fund we can claim your rebate on the spot.