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THE FOOT & ANKLE SURGEON



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When your heel hurts

There's a saying that "time wounds all heels." Well, time may not be the culprit. In fact, it's more likely that the pain is caused by fasciitis— inflammation of the fascia. The fascia is a thick band of tissue that runs along the bottom of the foot. Sometimes this band pulls away from the heel. This problem may be caused by flat feet or by high-heeled shoes.

Once the fascia begins to pull away, bony protrusions often form on the heel bone. These are called heel spurs. Between the inflammation and the spurs, patients often experience extreme pain. This occurs most often when the patient first rises after sleeping or sitting for an extended period of time. The pain upon standing may be so bad that it causes the patient to limp, with the pain persisting for some time.

Home care for this problem can include using over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications or soaking the heels in ice water three times per day.

Patients are also urged to stick to comfortable shoes and avoid working out or playing sports until they have healed.

In more severe cases, cortisone injections may be used. Many patients find that their fasciitis responds well to physical therapy or the use of custom orthotics. Taping and padding are sometimes prescribed. In some cases, surgery to remove the heel spur is performed.

Pain in the heel should not be ignored. If pain persists, contact us. We can help you find much-needed relief.



Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!



The pain of arthritis

Arthritis is often associated with old age; however, many young people exhibit symptoms of joint problems. Several types of arthritis can affect people who have not yet reached their senior years.

► **Juvenile arthritis** affects nearly 300,000 Americans between the ages of 2 and 16.

► **Rheumatoid arthritis** generally affects women between the ages of 20 and 30. It affects more than 2 million Americans. Nearly 1.5 million of these are women.

► **Ankylosing spondylitis (bamboo spine)** usually affects people between the ages of 16 and 35. Somewhere between 300,000 and 1 million people—mostly women—suffer from the disease.

Most types of arthritis first manifest themselves as stiff, swollen joints. Diagnosing and treating this problem in the earliest stages may reduce some of the damage arthritis can cause.

About a quarter of the bones in the body are located in the feet. For this reason, the first signs of arthritis often appear in this area. Tenderness in the heels in young men, for instance, is sometimes an early symptom of Reiter's syndrome. Psoriatic arthritis is sometimes discovered when changes are noted in the toe bones or when the nails show signs of pitting.

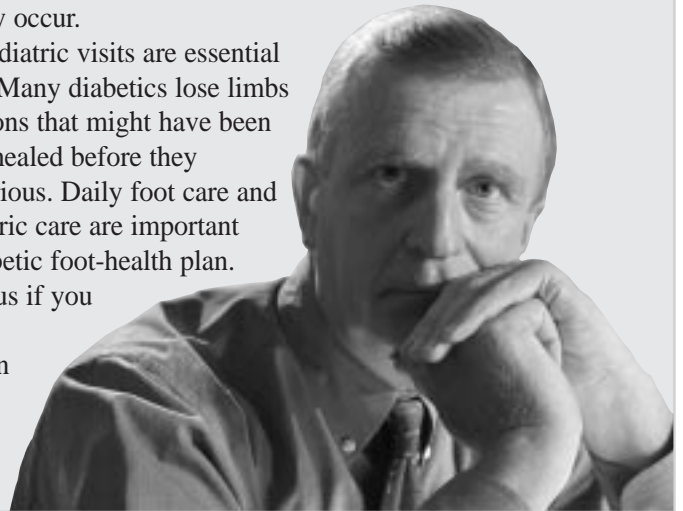
Diagnosing arthritis often begins with a foot-health examination. Consult with us if you notice any tenderness or swelling in your feet.

Diabetic ulcers and foot abnormalities

Foot ulcers in diabetics can cause serious problems. Avoiding those ulcers by keeping a close eye on the feet is the best course of action. Because diabetics often experience loss of sensation in their feet, daily foot inspections are necessary.

Research has shown that bone-structure abnormalities in the feet may be related to the formation of ulcers. This is particularly true of ulcers located near the big toe. When you recognize the areas where structural problems could lead to ulcers, there are two things you can do to help prevent them. First, treatment with orthotics or special shoes can help to prevent ulcers from forming. Second, the patient will be especially aware of the areas to watch for problems and can report them quickly if they occur.

Regular podiatric visits are essential for diabetics. Many diabetics lose limbs due to infections that might have been prevented or healed before they became so serious. Daily foot care and regular podiatric care are important parts of a diabetic foot-health plan. Consult with us if you want more information on how to keep your feet healthy.



Buy the shoe that fits

Select children's shoes based on how they fit and how well they protect the feet. The shoe should resemble the shape of the foot and give the feet room for growth. Different types of shoes are required at different ages.

Infants need shoes that cover their feet and allow for ankle flexibility. Toddlers shuffle as they walk, so avoid buying them shoes with rubber soles, which may cause them to trip. Teens should wear shoes that are comfortable. If they can be convinced to forego fashion in favor of comfort, they may be able to avoid foot problems later in life.

As they grow, many children become interested in sports. Running shoes and other specialized footwear may be expensive, but they offer superior support and protection. Talk to us for recommendations on the best shoes for your child's growing feet.





Your feet can be healthy for life

As you age, having healthy feet can have a marked effect on your quality of life. Unfortunately, many people ignore their feet throughout their lives and then don't understand why they experience foot problems in their old age. These problems can range from mild discomfort to the loss of mobility. Caring for feet properly now can help keep feet healthy throughout life.

One of the first things people need to realize is that foot pain isn't normal. In some recent surveys, over 60 percent of the respondents said they experienced foot pain most of the time. This pain may be related to footwear, occupational hazards, hereditary problems, and lack of exercise. Worse yet, because feet provide the walking and standing foundation for the whole body, problems with the feet can affect the legs, hips, and back.

As feet age, they experience natural changes, including thickening of toenails, loss of protective fat, poor circulation, and loss of range of motion. Keeping the feet healthy can help to avoid or minimize these difficulties. Daily foot care, including daily inspection of the feet, can help you to be aware of changes in your feet. Pain and other problems should be reported to us.

Daily exercise, such as walking, can help to keep bones and muscles limber and improve circulation even as the feet age. Regular exercise and regular podiatric checkups are two good ways you can help to keep your feet healthy for life.

Do your feet get cold? * * * * *

Cold feet are sometimes a symptom of a circulatory disorder called Raynaud's phenomenon. This disorder affects the extremities, causing toes and fingers to become numb and turn blue or white. This change can be caused by cold or by emotional stress. An attack of Raynaud's can last up to an hour and cause the skin to turn a deep purplish red. Itching may occur as the attack ends.

The phenomenon can sometimes be brought on by having frostbite or by being exposed to cold and dampness. Sometimes it is related to occupation. Typists, pianists, and those who use their hands or feet to operate machinery that vibrates continuously are more likely to suffer from Raynaud's. The problem seems to affect women more often than men.

Treatment includes warming up during an attack. Quick action, such as running warm water over the extremities or wrapping them in a towel and using a heating pad, may lessen the severity of the problem. Smokers should try to give up nicotine to improve circulation. Exercise and stress-control techniques are also recommended. In addition, there are medications that have been used successfully in some cases.

Because circulation problems may first manifest themselves in the feet, podiatrists are often the first to identify Raynaud's phenomenon in a patient. We look for symptoms of systemic and circulatory problems during a foot-health exam. If you experience symptoms that you feel might be Raynaud's or want to know more about this ailment, contact our office.



Cold hands, warm heart

Women tend to feel cold in their extremities more often than men. This isn't necessarily because they are more warm-hearted. It is, however, related to the fact that women have smaller blood vessels carrying less blood to the extremities. Those blood vessels also tend to constrict faster in women, rushing the blood back to internal organs. (Hmmm, maybe that's where that "cold hands, warm heart" theory comes from.) Women also have less muscle mass, and their fat is not as evenly distributed throughout their bodies as in men. For these reasons, they tend to feel the cold more, especially in their extremities.

**Center for Advanced Foot
& Ankle Surgery**

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*Here's your
foot care newsletter!*

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Days & Hours

Mon.	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Tues.	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Wed.	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Thurs.	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Fri.	9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

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Surgery

For correction and healing

Surgery is a frightening prospect to many patients, and it is usually only considered when conservative methods have not alleviated the problem. While the thought of surgery may be uncomfortable, the possibility of being free from pain and mobile again is a rewarding outcome.

Surgery on the foot or ankle can often be performed in the office or in an outpatient facility, although some procedures will require hospitalization.



Ambulatory surgery

Due to modern surgical techniques, many different procedures are now done in the office or in an outpatient facility, with patients being able to walk right after their surgeries. These surgeries include correction of nail problems and removal of ganglions, neuromas, and plantar warts. All these are soft-tissue problems. The recovery times are usually minimal, and follow-up visits are scheduled to be sure proper healing is occurring. Depending on the severity of the problem, hammertoes can also be corrected in this type of setting; however, a special shoe is necessary for the patient to be mobile afterward, and several weeks of healing are required.

These types of foot surgeries have all been performed successfully many times. Patients who have had these surgeries know that the ability to move about without pain or discomfort makes the procedure worthwhile.