

# THE FOOT & ANKLE SURGEON



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[www.advancedfootsurgery.com](http://www.advancedfootsurgery.com)

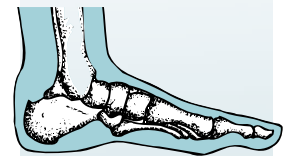
## Surgery can cure hammertoes

Hammertoes occur when the first joint of a toe bends down. This may cause the toe to curl inward as if the foot were trying to make a fist with the toes. Hammertoes have a variety of causes. Some are related to arthritis or caused by trauma to the foot. Others occur in people whose footwear is too tight. Most people who develop hammertoes have inherited a genetic predisposition to the problem.

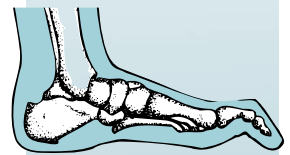
Hammertoes can cause painful symptoms, including corns, swelling, inflammation, and discoloration of the affected joint, and pain whenever footwear presses on the top of the toe. Other symptoms may include pain in the joint and the ball of the foot. Hammertoes come in three general types—flexible, semiflexible, and rigid. Most generally require minor surgery.

Many hammertoe sufferers believe that in order to have their hammertoes treated, they have to be hospitalized, have a large incision on the toe(s), have a surgical pin inserted into the toe, and be off of their feet for a while. This is no longer the case. Minimally invasive, 1-stitch operations performed on an outpatient basis in the doctor's office without pins or casts are now available. Patients walk out of the office in a special surgical shoe, and many are surprised to find that they can return to normal activities more quickly than they thought possible.

Anesthesia options for patients undergoing hammertoe surgery include just a local anesthetic (numbing of the toe with a novocaine-type solution), or intravenous sedation followed by local anesthesia. In any case, our goal is to make hammertoe surgery the least uncomfortable and most pleasant experience possible. The success rate for hammertoe surgery is very good, with most patients going on to lead more mobile and pain-free lives.



Normal



Hammertoe

**Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!**

## When cartilage erodes

Feet are often the first place where the pain of arthritis is felt. Osteoarthritis is frequently related to age, often being caused by trauma to the joints or the stress of years and years of use. Other types of arthritis are related to systemic diseases. These include gout, psoriasis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Arthritis begins with cartilage. Cartilage is also called “connective tissue” and is the material found at the ends of bones. The presence of cartilage means that bones can move against each other freely without grinding.

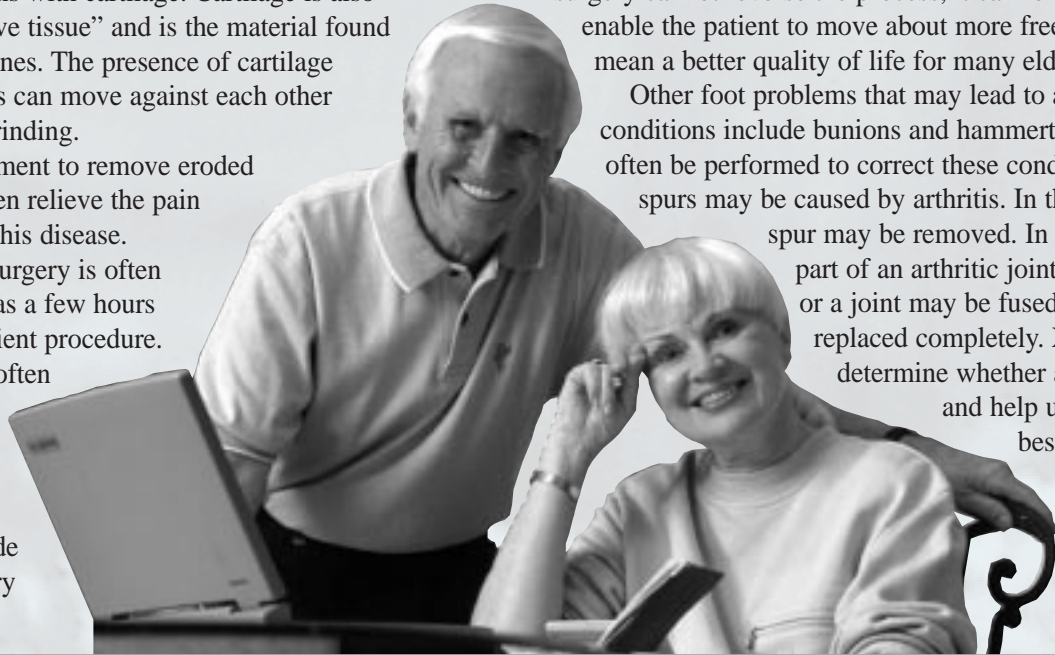
Surgical treatment to remove eroded cartilage can often relieve the pain associated with this disease.

Reconstructive surgery is often done in as little as a few hours and as an outpatient procedure. The patient can often walk within limitations and with a special shoe. Other treatments include anti-inflammatory

medications to reduce swelling of the joint, cortisone injections, special shoes, strapping, orthotics, and physical therapy.

The progression of arthritis often means that the joint becomes more painful and more difficult to move. Although surgery cannot reverse the process, it can relieve pain and enable the patient to move about more freely. This can mean a better quality of life for many elderly patients.

Other foot problems that may lead to arthritic conditions include bunions and hammertoes. Surgery can often be performed to correct these conditions. Bone spurs may be caused by arthritis. In this case, the bone spur may be removed. In some surgeries, part of an arthritic joint may be removed or a joint may be fused, stiffened, or replaced completely. X-rays can determine whether arthritis is present and help us decide on the best course of treatment to relieve pain and restore mobility.



## Diabetes—Danger for your feet

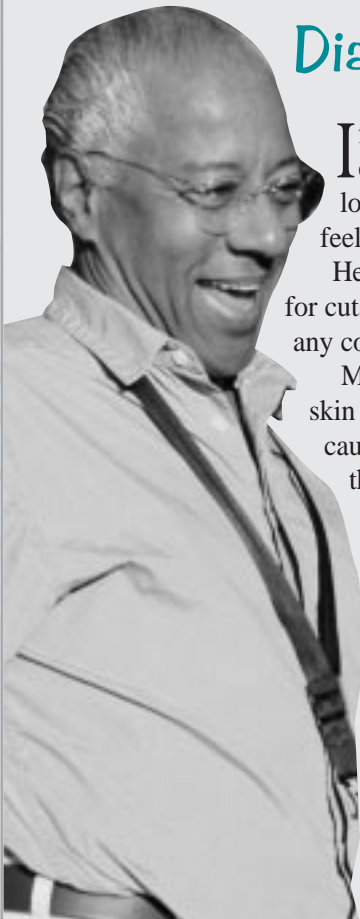
If you've been diagnosed with diabetes, it's especially important for you to have regular foot examinations. You may not notice a change in the shape of your foot or that you're beginning to lose feeling in this area. Nerve damage can interfere with the nerves in your feet, so you may not feel blisters or skin irritations that can cause ulcers and even lead to amputations.

Help us keep your feet healthy by paying special attention to them. Check them every day, looking for cuts or sores, redness, or any signs of swelling or infection. Be sure to call our office if you have any concerns.

Make your feet a priority in your daily routine. Keep them clean and dry. Use a small amount of skin lotion on the tops and bottoms of your feet—avoid using between the toes, where moisture can cause infection. If you have corns or calluses, rub them gently with a pumice stone. Don't try to cut these rough areas off or use liquid removers, since they can damage your skin. Wear shoes and socks throughout the day to provide additional protection for your feet. File your toenails carefully when you must, taking care not to damage the surrounding skin. Diabetics should have their nails professionally trimmed in our office to reduce the chances of infection.

To keep a good flow of blood going to your feet, elevate them regularly throughout the day, and avoid crossing your legs for long periods of time. Avoid tight socks or anything that could be constricting. If you're not already a fairly active person, talk with your doctor about which type of exercise would be best for you.

Remember that the most important way to protect your feet is by following your doctor's specific instructions about managing your diabetes. Regular foot exams should be an important part of your diabetes-management plan. If you haven't been having regular foot examinations, call our office about scheduling an appointment.



## Prevent athlete's foot

**A**thlete's foot is a fungal infection that typically appears on the feet, but it's not just limited to athletes!

The name was chosen because it's common among those who play sports; however, it grows in dark, moist places, so almost any feet can be breeding grounds. It's easy to imagine the athlete's foot fungus growing in locker rooms and around swimming pools, but certain shoes can create the warm, dark, humid environment the fungus needs.

You have a higher risk of developing athlete's foot if you've had it before, have sweaty feet, or frequent places where the fungus grows. The first place you'll usually spot symptoms is between your toes. It could spread to the arches, soles, and toenails if not caught early enough. Symptoms may include dryness, redness, cracking, and blisters, which could open and become painful.

It's not easy to prevent athlete's foot, since it's usually contracted in places where people commonly go barefoot. But the following practical tips can help:

- ✓ If you're going to a pool or the gym, be sure to wear flip-flops or shower shoes—not just to the pool, but also in the showers and locker rooms.
- ✓ When you come out of the pool or shower, be sure to dry your feet thoroughly—especially between your toes.
- ✓ Choose light, airy shoes that allow your feet to breathe.
- ✓ If your feet tend to sweat a lot, use talcum powder to soak up the excess moisture. And wear absorbent cotton socks, changing them during the day, if necessary, to ensure that your feet stay dry.

If you have any questions or concerns about athlete's foot, be sure to call our office. We can provide treatments that will help relieve the discomfort of this common foot ailment.

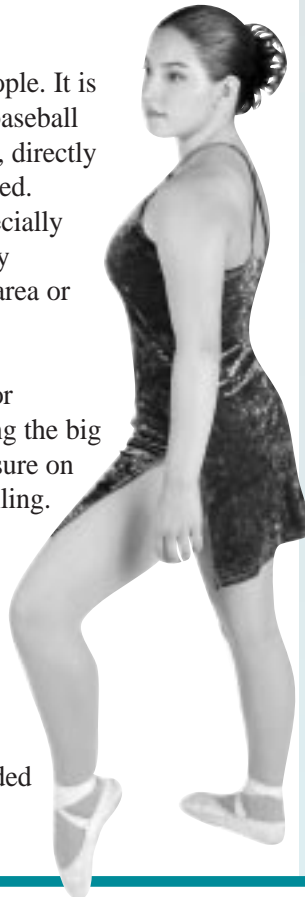
## “Heal sesamoid!”

**S**esamoiditis is a condition that often affects active, young people. It is particularly common among ballet dancers and catchers on baseball teams. As you may suspect, it mostly affects the ball of the foot, directly behind the big toe, which is where the sesamoid bones are located.

Almost any activity can bring on sesamoiditis. Runners, especially those who often run on hills or tend to run on their forefeet, may experience this problem. People who lack protective fat in this area or who have high arches may also be prone to sesamoiditis.

The exact cause of the condition is inflammation of the area surrounding the sesamoid bones. These bones are responsible for absorbing impact during walking and running, as well as pushing the big toe downward to help propel the body forward. Continued pressure on this area, or injury, results in gradually increasing pain and swelling.

Sesamoiditis can almost always be treated conservatively. If the problem is in the early stages, patients may directly apply ice after exercising. More advanced cases often require rest and padding to relieve pressure on the ball of the foot. Taping the big toe to immobilize it will also give it time to heal properly. Anti-inflammatory medications can be used to reduce swelling and pain during the healing period. In some cases, steroid injections into the affected joint and a walking cast may be needed for several weeks in order to make a complete recovery.



## Circulation problems are serious business

**C**irculatory problems affecting the feet can result from a number of different causes. Chief among these is diabetes, but kidney disease, increased blood pressure, and problems with the lymphatic system or with veins or arteries can all lead to poor circulation. Because the feet are extremities, difficulties with circulation usually appear there first.

The symptoms of poor circulation include pain and swelling as well as discoloration. Many patients experience cramping or feelings of tightness in the foot. If a skin ulceration develops, a problem with the veins, arteries, or lymphatic system may be responsible. Diabetes often results in ulcers as well. If blood to the extremities is blocked, pain may occur after walking.

If you experience these symptoms or if you have diabetes or another known problem that affects circulation, we can help. Evaluation in our office often begins with a Doppler test or other noninvasive testing. Often these problems can be treated with exercise, cushioning, or medication. If necessary, referral to another specialist may be made.

Circulation problems that are left untreated can lead to serious consequences, including the need for amputation. Seeking treatment for circulatory problems and following a prescribed course of action can help to prevent such dire consequences. Diabetics should inspect their feet daily and have their foot health evaluated regularly by a podiatrist. Others who have difficulties that lead to circulation problems also need regular foot examinations, and those who experience symptoms like the ones described above should call us for a diagnosis.

## Center for Advanced Foot & Ankle Surgery

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*Here's your  
foot care newsletter!*

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Lady Lake, FL 32159

#### 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.
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## FOOT FACT

Did you know that the human foot contains 26 bones (the two feet contain a quarter of all the bones in the body), 33 joints, and more than 100 tendons, muscles, and ligaments?



## Computerized gait analysis is here!

Gait analysis is important to many athletes, but it's also very helpful to those with imbalance problems that call for treatment with orthotics. With computerized gait analysis, we can create customized orthotics that are more precisely fitted to meet your needs. Our system means that the data we collect is more detailed than ever, yet the analysis is easier to perform.

Because the feet are the foundation of the body, biomechanical problems in this area can result in problems in the ankles, knees, hips, and back. A gait analysis can pinpoint imbalance problems and give us the data we need to correct the imbalance and improve your feet and your overall posture. This can prevent discomfort and injuries as you exercise or go about your daily activities.

With computerized gait analysis, the patient simply walks on a special surface that scans his or her footsteps. The pattern is recorded at small intervals, and information is generated to be viewed by the doctor. Next, this data is combined with other diagnostic information and sent to a laboratory, where orthotics matching your exact prescription needs are designed.

The orthotics lab will keep in touch with our office during the process so that we can answer any questions they may have. When the final specifications for your orthotics are deduced, a mold is made that is customized to your arch height with the goal of correcting the imbalance we have diagnosed. The customized orthotics are then checked by quality control and shipped to our office.

We'll be sure the orthotics are made exactly as ordered and then call you to schedule an appointment for you to receive them. Together, we can solve your foot imbalance problems to make your life more comfortable both now and in the future.