

# THE FOOT & ANKLE SURGEON



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## Hard-workin' feet

Many of the accidents that occur in the workplace affect the feet. By protecting your feet while you're hard at work, you can save money (for both you and your employer) and keep yourself on the job.

Basically, there are four types of work hazards that endanger feet:

**1** Mechanical accidents, such as cuts or falling objects, are the most common. You can protect your feet by wearing steel-toed shoes, which are puncture resistant and provide instep protection. Steel-toed shoes may help your foot escape an injury entirely or at least lessen the blow.

**2** Chemical burns are also common when caustic substances are dropped or spilled. Shoes made of vinyl or natural rubber with soles that resist corrosion can help protect feet from this type of injury.

**3** Burns that occur while working around hot materials can be avoided by wearing shoes that have heat-resistant soles. To protect tops of feet, wear foundry boots or take other measures that will resist burning materials.

**4** Foot fungus is an infection that often occurs when feet are regularly exposed to damp conditions.

Wearing water-repellent shoes, lined rubber boots, or rubbers over your shoes can help keep moisture away from feet. Dry feet thoroughly as soon as they are out of the dampness.

Protective footwear is worth the extra cost to you to avoid serious injuries to your feet. We see many occupational injuries that could have been prevented by taking the necessary precautions. Please keep your feet safe so that we don't see you in our office for an occupational injury.



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

## Don't just stand around...

...move around. That's right, it's not good for you to just stand around. Standing in one spot places constant demands on the same foot and leg muscles.

### Give your feet some support

Do you stand on a hard floor for long periods of time for your work? If you do, it might benefit you to start wearing support stockings or pantyhose with support in them. Studies have shown that these stockings stop blood from gathering in the feet, legs, and ankles, where it can cause swelling. Researchers believe the tight fit may be the reason for this.

People whose jobs require them to be on their feet most of the time are likely to have tired, aching feet at the end of the day. In addition, existing problems can be aggravated by all this standing. The discomfort of hammertoes, bunions, and other foot disorders may become more

pronounced. Some of the immediate results of standing in one place for too long include cramping and perspiration of the feet.

When you must stand for long periods of time, there are things you can do to decrease the stress placed on your feet. Even subtle movements, such as shifting your weight from one foot to the other or rolling your feet over to the outsides, can help reduce the stress on affected muscles. Standing on a piece of carpet or a corrugated rubber mat that will absorb shock is also a good idea. Some people find that standing with one foot elevated on a rest or leaning the body against something eases muscle tension. Wear shoes that provide good support, and change your shoes and socks during your workday (maybe during lunch).

Off the job, you can relieve pain by elevating your feet, as well as by soaking them in warm and then cold water to increase circulation. However, walking is the best exercise for tired feet. Feet that receive regular exercise will be healthier and age more slowly.

If foot problems persist or are aggravated by standing for long periods of time on the job, see us for help. Orthotics or other treatments may help neutralize the pressure and bring much-needed relief.

## Healthy for life

Your feet are wonders. They are a (pardon the pun) feat of engineering. They are flexible and highly functional, yet strong enough to support your weight and take the impact of tons of stress every day. They contain 26 bones, 33 joints, and over 100 ligaments, tendons, and muscles. They look fairly simple, but in reality they are complex and intricate.

Unfortunately, these engineering masterpieces don't rate the attention of many manmade engineering marvels. For much of our lives, we neglect our feet. Only when they begin to hurt do we begin to give them some much-deserved attention. About three-quarters of all Americans suffer from some type of foot problem during their lives.

Before your feet begin to cry out for attention, you can take steps to help keep them healthy. Daily inspection is the best way to keep feet in shape. Look your feet over from top to bottom, checking heels and between toes. Look for anything out of the ordinary, including signs of fungal infection, odor, warts, blisters, corns, and ingrown nails. Watch also for signs of developing bunions or hammertoes. Be aware of any discomfort that could indicate a heel spur or biomechanical problem.

If you find something that doesn't seem quite right, do not self-treat the problem. Contact us for professional care. Feet are intricate structures that require care by a foot specialist. We want to help you keep your feet healthy for a lifetime. We can meet that goal when you make us part of your overall health-care team.



## Quality counts

Quality health care is the top priority in our office. That means our clinical staff are held to very high standards in the way they practice podiatric medicine and in the way care is delivered.

We want you to know that our first goal is to provide you with thorough evaluations and accurate care, but it's essential that we deliver that care in a manner that is courteous and puts you—the patient—first. We welcome your questions. We want you to understand your diagnosis and why we are recommending a particular treatment.

Quality also means responding immediately to emergency situations. When an emergency occurs, we may need to ask appointed patients to wait a little while before they receive their care. We want you to know that if you were the one needing emergent care, we would ask our other patients to wait as well. When we are treating patients who have suffered an accident, developed an infection, or are experiencing an acute episode of an ailment, they need our help as quickly as possible to obtain relief. We are committed to providing that help promptly.

Of course, clinical quality is number one, but we also strive to provide quality, courteous service in all aspects of our practice. Whether it is scheduling, reimbursement, or greeting you when you enter the office, we are always looking to give you our very best. We hope you'll feel free to ask questions or make comments—both positive and negative—about the service we provide. Only when we know how you feel about our service can we take steps to improve it.

# These shoes were made for walking

If you are getting serious about walking (walking three times a week or more), you need to think seriously about walking shoes. The shoes you choose for walking should give your feet both the support and protection they need when you hit the sidewalk or track.

## **The well-built shoe**

A walking shoe that gives you everything you need should look a certain way from heel to toe.

- The heel counter should be firm enough to stabilize the back of the shoe and hold your heel nicely in place.
- The ankle should have a padded collar for comfort when putting the shoes on and taking them off, as well as while walking.
- The Achilles notch is an opening at the top of the ankle collar that takes the pressure off your Achilles tendon.
- Ties should be easy to thread and tighten, and stay tied with a double knot.
- Uppers should be made of quality material that protects the foot. High-tops may offer more support than low-cut shoes.
- Soles—both insoles and outer soles—need to be made of quality materials. Outer soles should have solid tread that provides plenty of traction but is flexible enough for you to move comfortably. Insoles should have plenty of cushioning and give you the support you need in this area. There is also a midsole that should absorb shock.
- Toe boxes need to be roomy so that the toes don't feel cramped. You should be able to fit your thumbnail between the end of your longest toe and the tip of the toe box.



## **Buy the best shoe for you**

Even the most expensive, highest-quality walking shoes will not do what you need if they don't fit properly. To be sure you have walking shoes that are going to stay comfortable, follow these tips for good fit.

- Shop at the end of the day. Feet swell throughout the day, and it's best to be fitted when they are at their widest.
- Shop at a store that specializes in athletic shoes and employs clerks who are knowledgeable about both sports and shoes.
- Have both feet measured. Purchase shoes to fit the larger foot.
- Dress your feet for walking. Wear the same socks that you would wear during your workout.
- Go for a walk around the store a few times.

Only by walking in the shoes can you really tell how they will feel once you hit the road in them. Shoes should not need to be "broken in." You should be able to tell fairly quickly whether they are a good "fit" for you or not.

## *Don't run into trouble!*

Running and jogging are both very good for you. They are good for your muscles and cardiovascular system, and they promote overall fitness. However, it's very easy to sustain an injury while running or jogging. Even if you don't trip or fall, stress injuries can occur over time.

Injuries that occur while running require rest, ice, compression, and elevation (RICE). Once the pain and swelling subside, most runners can gradually return to their chosen activities. However, if pain persists, professional evaluation and treatment are probably necessary.

Here is a list of the most common injuries sustained by runners:

★ **Achilles tendonitis** is inflammation of the sheath around the Achilles tendon. It is usually associated with overuse of an unprepared tendon. If you experience pain in the heel while running, stop until the pain recedes. Achilles tendonitis generally responds to conservative treatments, including strapping.

★ **Flat feet** is an inherited condition that can cause pain in

the calves and feet. Prescription orthotics can often help relieve this discomfort.

★ **Heel spurs** often cause irritation of the heel bone. Anti-inflammatory medications, taping, or orthotics can often prevent this pain.

★ **Shin splints** occur when the tendons in the front or inside of the lower leg become inflamed. Rest is required to help this area heal. If pain persists, seek professional attention.

★ **Sprained ankles** can occur anytime, but runners have more opportunity to sustain this type of injury. RICE is the first treatment. Taping and casting can help a severe sprain to heal.

★ **Stress fractures** are cracks that occur in bones and heal very slowly. A walking cast or other supportive footwear may be necessary.

Prevention of running injuries is always the best medicine. Be sure to stretch, warm up slowly, and wear the proper footwear whenever you run. Talk to us if you need some tips on keeping your feet in the best shape for running.

**Center for Advanced Foot  
& Ankle Surgery**

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*Here's your  
foot care newsletter!*

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*“Hey, nice feet!”*

Okay, so that’s not exactly a comment you hear all the time, but it should be. Healthy feet ARE beautiful feet. Unfortunately, many people don’t keep their feet as healthy as they could be.

Our appearance-conscious culture puts a lot of emphasis on clothes, faces, and figures, but only in sandals or at the beach or pool are feet given any notice. Most of the time, we neglect our feet until pain forces us to take action. Problems caused by high-heeled shoes or shoes that fit poorly may build up over years until calluses and other abnormalities affect both appearance and comfort.

Here are some precautions anyone can take to help keep their feet looking great all year long.

**1 Pay attention to your feet.** Don’t wait until feet hurt to take a second look at them. Inspect them regularly for corns, calluses, and bunions.

**2 Wear shoes that fit well.** Wearing shoes that fit properly and give your feet enough room can help avoid many foot problems. Avoid sandals or other open shoes in cold or wet weather.

**3 Be aware that foot pain isn’t normal.** When your feet hurt, something is wrong. Foot pain is not a regular part of aging. When your feet hurt, seek a professional diagnosis.

**4 Talk to us about a regular maintenance plan for your feet.** We can help you take steps to keep your feet healthy and looking good.