



APRIL 2014
NEWSLETTER



April is National

FOOT HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH!

If your feet hurt regularly, or even occasionally, you're not alone. According to the American Podiatric Medical Association, approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population experiences at least one foot problem annually. Given that the average person logs over 115,000 miles on their feet in a lifetime, avoiding foot issues should be a priority.

With the amount of time we spend on our feet each day, it's easy to overwork the joints and soft tissue of even the healthiest feet. Here are five of the most common conditions that lead to visits to foot and ankle specialists:

PLANTAR FASCIITIS – Referred to by some as heel spur syndrome, this condition results from inflammation at the area of the heel bone where the plantar fascia is anchored. It can be caused by excess strain on the plantar fascia and causes pain on the bottom of the heel when bearing weight.

ATHLETE'S FOOT – Caused by a fungal infection of the skin, this condition is characterized by red, scaly rashes on the soles and sides of the feet or a whitening of the skin between the toes due to excess moisture retention.

TOENAIL FUNGUS – Most often caused by fungal infections that occurs underneath the toenail, resulting in brown or yellow discoloration of the nail as well as thickening of the nail.

CORNS AND CALLUSES – Corns are small areas of deep, thickened skin that can be painful. They are often found over bony structures such as toe joints and are the result of friction against these areas. Calluses are larger areas of thickened skin, and are often found on the soles or side of the feet.

BUNIONS – Caused by abnormality in foot function, these bumps on the side or top of the big toe joint are accompanied by redness, pain and a big toe that appears displaced toward the other toes.

These are just a few of the many conditions that can cause discomfort in your daily mobility. If you are experiencing these or other issues, please don't hesitate to visit Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists for a personal foot assessment.



Foot Health Alert

EXERCISE CAUTION WHEN MOWING YOUR LAWN

Spring is in the air, which means lawns are growing and outdoor yard work becomes a weekend priority for many homeowners.

It is important to keep lawn mower safety in mind, whether you are tackling the lawn duties yourself or handing off the chore to a child. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, over 250,000 people are treated for lawn mower-related injuries annually, including nearly 17,000 children.

One of the most important guidelines to remember is that children should be 12 years of age or older before they are allowed to operate a push mower, and ages 16 and older to operate a driving lawn mower.

Here are some additional tips to help ensure that your family enjoys a beautiful, well kept lawn without the risk of potentially fatal injury:

- 1 Make sure your mower is in good condition. Consider an annual tune up to repair any parts that are not in top condition, which also presents the opportunity to fasten bolts, secure the blade and check the oil level and fuel quality.
- 2 Only use a mower that offers a control that stops the mower blade from moving instantly if the handle is let go. This is referred to by some as a dead-man switch, and is a common feature in modern models.
- 3 Do not operate a mower without its intended safety equipment, and do not modify the equipment to satisfy your personal preferences.
- 4 Wear appropriate footwear, such as sturdy or steel-toed boots, with minimal laces to prevent tangling risks. Do not mow while barefoot or wear flip flops.
- 5 Before mowing, always check the lawn for rocks, balls, children's toys and anything else that could be thrown from the blades. It is recommended that the mower wear protective eyewear to prevent unanticipated injuries from flying debris.
- 6 Always know where your children are when mowing the lawn, and don't allow them to ride along or to stand in front of you when operating the mower.

Spring is the perfect time to be outside enjoying the weather and fine-tuning your lawn for the entire year. Please use your best judgment to prevent even the slightest of injuries to you and your loved ones.

Top Tips for...

Applying NAIL POLISH

The old adage of not wearing sandals until after Easter and then putting them away after Labor Day is long gone. In cities such as Austin, it's common to see women wearing sandals, flip flops and other varieties of open toe footwear year round.

Given the prominent exposure of your toes, it is important to keep your nails looking their absolute best without having to rely on the salon manicures and pedicures each time.

Here are a few hints as you prepare to paint your nails with some festive spring-inspired tones:

AVOID HARSH OR ABRASIVE CHEMICALS

The first step when painting your nails is to thoroughly remove the old nail polish. Many people choose an acetone solution, which handles the job effectively, but can be tough on your nails in the long term. Consider a non-acetone solution and be sure to use a cotton pad to rub the old polish away.

CONSIDER KERYFLEX NAIL RESTORATION FOR DAMAGED NAILS

If you have cracks or are experiencing more serious nail disorders, consider the KeryFlex nail restoration system that is now available at Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists. KeryFlex uses polymer resins and special activators to create a durable, yet flexible artificial nail that can be applied in our office in 20–30 minutes typically.

ALWAYS USE A BASE COAT

Though it takes a bit longer, the value of the base coat can't be overemphasized. This step will keep your nails from taking on an unattractive yellow shade. And give the base coat a good four to five minutes to dry before applying the desired colored polish.



PICK THE RIGHT POLISH AND APPLY DOUBLE COATS

When choosing your nail polish, consider Dr. Remedy's Enriched Nail Care.

Dr. Remedy's is the first and only polish to receive the American Podiatric Medical Association seal of approval for its benefits to foot health. *Special Note—Dr. Remedy's spring colors have arrived at Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists and are on sale now!*

To gain a salon-quality finish without paying salon prices, take the time to add a second coat of polish. Wait until the first coat is fully dry before applying, and then enjoy the attractiveness and durability of your two-coat approach.

PRACTICE PATIENCE

It's always a good idea to have a book, phone or other form of distraction handy when doing nails. After all, there is some waiting involved as the various coats dry. If you take the time to allow the base coat and then first and second color coat to fully dry, the reward will be worth the while.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Q.

I feel as though my ankles are not as strong as they could be, and even the slightest misstep when exercising can cause some pain. Are there exercises that I can do at home to make my ankles stronger?

A.

It is important to realize that no form of foot pain should be considered normal. You may want to visit a foot and ankle specialist to determine if there may be deeper-rooted causes of the pain that could be addressed through a treatment program. There are a number of exercises that can improve the strength and mobility of your ankles. If you are sitting on top of your bed with your legs stretched out over the end, move your foot and ankle up and down for a count of 10 to 20 times. You can also move the foot and ankle in and out for the same number of repetitions. Next, rotate the ankles in clockwise and counter clockwise circles. Finally, a fun exercise involves using your foot and ankle to form each letter of the alphabet.

MEET THE TEAM



DR. CRAIG THOMAJAN



DR. SHINE JOHN

Rhiannon Torrez
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Certified Medical Assistant

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Clinical Scribe

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WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL A PODIATRIST?



You should call a podiatrist anytime you experience pain, discomfort, or notice changes in your feet. Key indicators include:

- You have persistent pain in your feet or ankles.
- You see noticeable changes to your nails or skin.
- Your feet are severely cracking, scaling, or peeling.
- There are blisters on your feet.
- Your toenail is getting thicker and causing you discomfort.
- You have heel pain accompanied by a fever, redness or numbness and tingling in your heel.
- You have diabetes or certain other diseases that affect your feet.

REFERRALS

YOU MEAN THE WORLD TO US!

There is no greater compliment you can pay us than to entrust us with the referral of a friend or family member. We'd like to thank the following people for doing so this past month:

Michelle G. • Riley P. • Bill P. • Dayna B-I. • Anne S. • Elizabeth B. • Noel M. • Jim S. • Jerry W. • Mary V. • Amy B. • Mike K./Kim T. • Monica N. • Michelle W. • Cliff H. • Faith V. • Alicia H. • Darren S. • Tracy S. • Charlene K. • C. Haitlin • Jessica C. • Wendy M. • Pete D. • Lisa A. • James H./Brad C. • Paige H. • Amanda F.

If you pass along our name to someone close to you, please let us know so we can say thanks!

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS!

Look for a special email in your inbox when your birthday rolls around, created just for you!

If you don't receive your birthday greeting but would like to in the future, please visit our Contact Page and let us know the date!

FREE BOOKS

FOR A LIMITED TIME!



Choose from four books offering helpful tips and treatments for diabetic foot care, running, heel pain and general foot pain.

These great resources were written by the knowledgeable doctors of Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists.

[CLICK HERE FOR YOUR FREE BOOKS NOW!](#)

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