



# September 2016

## News and Updates

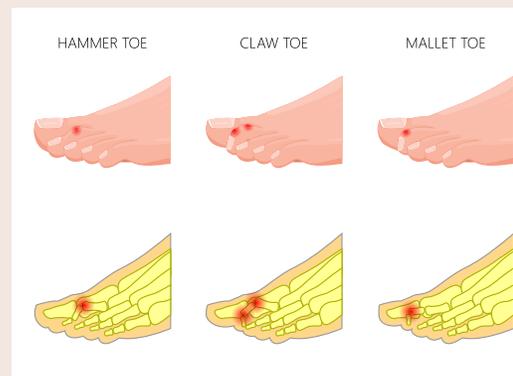


# Know Your Toes!

## The Difference Between Claw, Hammer, and Mallet Toes

It's time for some straight talk!

Sometimes your small toes can have a muscle imbalance that causes them to bend into odd positions. Although this problem can be the result of an underlying condition, more often than not it is caused by wearing shoes that are too small! When footwear doesn't fit properly, it forces toes to bend, and if they stay that way too long, the muscles eventually contract to the point of not being able to straighten. There are three main conditions that result:



**Claw toes** – this is when the toes bend up at the joint where they meet with the feet, then bend downward at the middle and tip joints so they appear curled toward the floor.

**Hammertoes** – typically affecting the second toe, the middle joint juts upward causing the tip to point downward like the head of a hammer. This often occurs with bunions.

**Mallet toes** – also mostly occurring in the second toe (although it can occur in others), this is signified by a downward bend in the joint closest to the tip.

These conditions can be painful and may cause corns and calluses from shoes rubbing against them, as well as difficulty walking. Prompt treatment is necessary to avoid needing to have them surgically straightened, so first—switch those shoes! Make sure your footwear fits and offers plenty of wiggle room. Use products like splints, pads, and inserts to hold your toes in the correct position and protect them from further damage. Finally, ask us about stretches you can do to help your muscles regain proper balance. We'll tell it to you straight (pun intended)!

### Meet the Team



**DR. CRAIG THOMAJAN**  
DPM, FACFAS



**DR. SHINE JOHN**  
DPM, FACFAS



**DR. BRETT SMITH**  
DPM, AACFAS



**DR. BRITTANY KALAPACH**  
DPM

**Tana Hager:** PMAC, Practice Administrator, Principal Manager

**Monica Velez:** Surgical Scheduler, Trainer

**Karin Jung:** Lead Medical Assistant, Trainer

**Shayne O'Connell:** Medical Assistant

**Sarah Schneider:** Medical Assistant

**Vishal Patel:** Medical Assistant

**Joshua Hernando:** Lead Clinical Coordinator

**Madeline Ryan:** Clinical Coordinator

**Frances Yule:** Billing Specialist

**Alexis Kirk:** Patient Scheduler

**Lindsey Ryder:** Insurance Verification

# Summer's End... Spotting Signs of Skin Cancer



As summer winds down, it's great to look back at all the fun times you've had, but it is also a great time to look for signs of skin cancer that can occur as a result of all that fun in the sun! Spotting signs is key to catching issues early and getting the prompt treatment needed. The best way to do this is by remembering your A B C's (and D's and E's!):

- **A is for Asymmetry.** A mole that is potentially cancerous will have an irregular shape, rather than being symmetrical.
- **B is for Border.** A non-cancerous mole typically has a smooth, even border. An irregular border that is hard to define is a sign of trouble.
- **C is for Color.** Moles should be a single shade of brown or tan, not multiple colors or an uneven distribution of color.
- **D is for Diameter.** Watch for anything greater than 6 millimeters in diameter (or approximately the size of a pencil eraser).
- **E is for Evolving.** If you notice a mole is different than it had been, or seems to be changing in size or color, it should be treated right away.

Remember these tips to keep you and your skin safe, and keep applying that sunscreen!

## Mark Your Calendars

- September 5** Labor Day – enjoy your last summer “hoorah”.
- September 9** Teddy Bear Day – give your favorite bear a hug.
- September 13** Positive Thinking Day – it's sure to be great!
- September 14** National Cream-filled Donut Day – yummy to the tummy.
- September 21** Miniature Golf Day – perfect for putt-putting around!
- September 25** National Comic Book Day – a good study break.



# Create a Great Study Space



Now that school's back in session, you'll want to encourage your kids to study, and creating the right environment is key! Let's face it, there are distractions all around us, from phones ringing, to dogs barking, to television and other technology, all of which means it's tough to concentrate, even

as an adult! Luckily, you can improve your children's study habits by following a few simple guidelines:

**Do away with distractions.** Set up a study space void of technology (other than a computer, of course)—no smart phones, television, or social media allowed!

**Keep the study space consistent and well-stocked.** Designate a place for studying and keep pencils, erasers, paper, calculators and other items handy so children don't have to get up and go search for what they need.

**Stay organized.** It can be hard to concentrate in the midst of clutter, not to mention difficult to find everything you need. Make sure the designated study area stays organized and neat.

**Allow breaks.** Just as with adults at work, letting your kids get up and run around a bit or enjoy an afterschool snack helps keep their brains fresh and better focused on their studies when they go back at it.

**Stick to a schedule.** Designating a time for studying and sticking to it helps kids stay on top of their studies and know when it's time to do homework vs. time to play.

**Furnish it for success.** Enough desk space and an upright chair will give your child a place to spread out their work while staying comfortable and alert. Also, make sure there is good lighting as well as ample space for supplies.

**Be available.** If your kids have a question or need any help, make sure you are there to give them the support and encouragement they need!

## Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists Welcomes a New Doctor!

### Brittany Kalapach, DPM



Dr. Kalapach, DPM is a native Austinite and a graduate of Westlake high school in Westlake Hills, Austin, Texas. She received her Bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Texas at Austin where she was an active member of the Longhorn Band as well as orchestras and other concert bands. She was active in the Westlake community as a music tutor and a University of Texas Summer Band counselor.

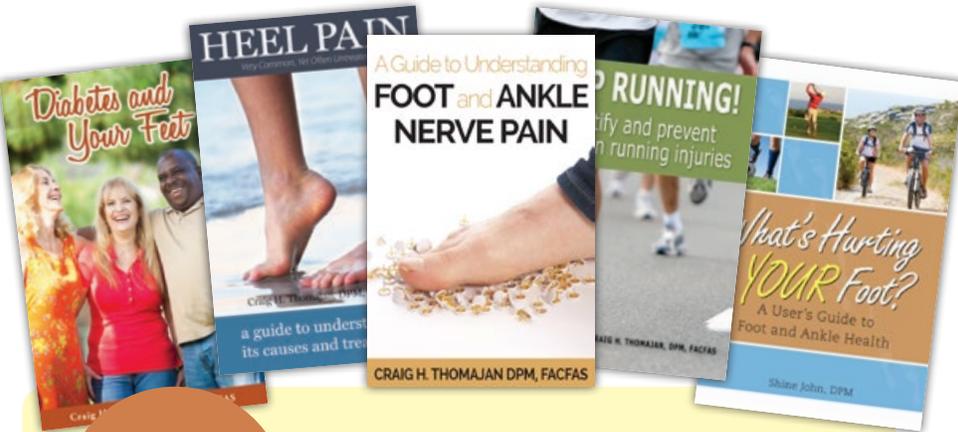
After undergraduate studies, Dr. Kalapach, DPM obtained a Doctorate in Podiatric Medicine from the Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine. While at Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine, Dr. Kalapach, DPM was the President of the Podiatric Association for Diabetes and a member of the American Diabetes Association. She also worked as a teaching assistant and an Ambassador for the University.

Following graduation, Dr. Kalapach, DPM completed a three year foot and ankle surgical residency at the Louis Stokes Veterans Administration Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio, where she gained broad experiences in a variety of podiatry specialty areas. Dr. Kalapach, DPM brings with her experience and has special interests in diabetic foot care, lower extremity limb salvage, forefoot surgery, rearfoot surgery and wound care.

Dr. Kalapach, DPM enjoys performing with the University Texas Longhorn Alumni Band, soccer, Texas football and spending time with her two German shepherds.



Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists  
5000 Bee Cave Rd, Ste 202 • Austin, TX 78746  
(512) 328-8900 • [www.AustinFootAndAnkle.com](http://www.AustinFootAndAnkle.com)



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Books

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# Prompt Attention for Puncture Wounds

After stepping on something sharp, the first thing you'd probably do is scream out in pain then hop around on your good foot, but the next thing you better do is take care of it. Prompt treatment of puncture wounds is crucial to preventing infection. If you don't have diabetes, and you have had a tetanus shot, a minor puncture wound can be treated at home with a little TLC.

First, as much as we're sure you don't want to, you're going to have to take a look at it. Check if the object that caused the wound—or any piece of the object—is still inside. If it is, use sterilized tweezers to carefully remove it. Next, after allowing some blood to flow for a bit to promote cleaning, stop the bleeding by applying direct pressure. Then, wash the wound thoroughly with mild soap and water. Do not use anything else to avoid harming tissue and slowing the healing process.

Protect the area with a sterile bandage. You can ease any pain by keeping your foot elevated as much as possible and taking recommended medication. If you see any signs of infection—redness, swelling, warmth, increased pain, fever, or discharge—call us right away.

For more information, just ask. We are always happy to help. Oh—and watch your step!

