

## MEET YOUR TEAM

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## 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!

## REFERRALS 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:

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Amanda W.    | Ken B.       |
| Amparo T.    | Kendall B.   |
| Bruce B.     | Larry B.     |
| Cynthia P.   | Leigh O.     |
| Delk W.      | Leslie H.    |
| Don V. S.    | Matthew L.   |
| Donald V.    | Nichole T.   |
| Donna R.     | Patricia W.  |
| Douglas M.   | Patty G.     |
| Gary E.      | Reneta V. S. |
| Irlene Z.    | Riis V.      |
| Jacquelyn V. | Sofia C.     |
| Jane W.      | Wilma S.     |
| Jeanne G.    |              |

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



## Tune In BEFORE TONING UP!

Shoes that feature "rocker bottoms" and "pods" have become the latest footwear craze – a new way to get in shape simply by walking or running. Toning footwear, which claims to promote muscle toning using micro-instability, can be found in a variety of brands and designs. While many may be ready to lace up the first pair they find, consumers are advised to be mindful of the footwear products they purchase and to wear them safely.

In general, toning footwear is designed to increase the use of certain muscle groups that may not be challenged in typical running or walking shoes. This increased use of specific muscles may result in increased muscle tone over time, similar to the benefits of walking barefoot in sand. However, proper safety should always be considered. Excessive exercise in toning footwear, including walking for extended periods of time without building up a break-in period, could lead to overuse injuries including sprains, Achilles tendinitis, and shin splints.

Here are a few important tips to consider when selecting toning shoes as part of your exercise routine:

- EASE INTO WEAR.** Toning footwear often has a break-in period in order to be worn safely and effectively. All types of toning shoes should first be worn for short periods of time, until the body adjusts to the new style of walking.
- LOOK FOR THE INDUSTRY SEAL OF APPROVAL.** Several toning footwear products, such as Reebok's EasyTone and those made by Grasshoppers, Avia, and Ryka, have been evaluated by the American Podiatric Medical Association and found to be foot-friendly.
- FIND THE RIGHT DESIGN FOR YOU.** There are numerous types and brands of toning footwear currently on the market, including designs created specifically for running or walking only. Since there are differences in how toning shoes are constructed, find a toning shoe that fits the foot comfortably and that does not cause your natural gait to feel too unstable.

So-called 'toning' or 'fitness' footwear is not a cure-all that will tone the entire body. Toning shoes should be utilized similar to any other piece of athletic training equipment. This type of footwear should be viewed as an addition to an exercise program, to strengthen and tone certain targeted muscle groups.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding toning footwear, don't hesitate to ask your foot and ankle specialist!



## What's in Your Suitcase?

YOU'VE PLANNED THE ITINERARY, PICKED OUT EACH OUTFIT, PACKED YOUR TOOTHBRUSH, SUNGLASSES AND SUNSCREEN, BUT DO YOU HAVE EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KICK UP YOUR FEET IN COMFORT THIS VACATION?

- Here are a few recommendations to help set you on the right path to an all-around footloose and fancy-free vacation:
  - Limit walking barefoot as it exposes feet to sunburn, plantar warts, athlete's foot, ringworm and other infections.
  - Wear shoes or flip-flops around the pool, to the beach, in the locker room and even in your hotel room to prevent injuries and limit the likelihood of contracting any bacterial infections.
  - Remember to apply sunscreen all over your feet, especially the tops and fronts of ankles, and don't forget to re-apply after you've been in the water.
  - Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day. This will not only help with overall health, but will also minimize foot swelling caused by the heat.
- Keep blood flowing to your feet with periodic ankle flexes, toe wiggles and calf stretches.
- Some activities at the beach, lake or river may require different types of footwear to be worn. Always pack an extra pair of sneakers or water shoes. If your shoes get wet, they should be dried out completely before your next wear to prevent bacteria or fungus from growing.
- If you injure your foot or ankle while on vacation, seek professional medical attention from a podiatric physician and begin treating your ailment immediately while you're away from home and before it worsens.

An active, enjoyable vacation can be directly associated with happy, healthy feet. Don't let foot issues keep you from spending time exploring new sites, visiting with friends and family, and most importantly, giving yourself a well deserved break.

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

*My parents are diabetic, and are very cautious about their overall health. I have heard that diabetes can negatively impact one's feet. How is this possible and what can be done to prevent foot issues?*

- Roger D., Round Rock

When you digest food, your body changes most of the food you eat into glucose (a form of sugar). Insulin allows this glucose to enter all the cells of your body and be used as energy. When you have diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin or can't use it properly, so the glucose builds up in your blood instead of moving into the cells. Over time, too much glucose in the blood can damage the blood vessels and nerves in your body, causing burning pain or loss of feeling in a part of your body.

The loss of feeling in your feet can make it hard for you to tell if you have a blister or sore. If little sores aren't taken care of, they can get worse and turn into ulcers. If these ulcers become infected, you may have to go to the hospital or, in very serious cases, have a foot amputated.

Some tips to prevent foot issues include washing your feet every day with lukewarm water and mild soap; drying your feet well, especially between the toes; taking particular care of your toenails; avoiding going barefoot; and regularly checking your feet for any signs of change. It's always better to be safe than sorry!

VISIT OUR CONTACT PAGE TO SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION and receive your gift of Miracle Foot Cream if yours is chosen to be featured in our newsletter!

## WHEN IT COMES TO TOES, Size Matters!

Just about everyone at some point has looked at their own feet to determine if their second toe is bigger than their big toe.

For those curious about this phenomenon, the condition is hereditary, and is officially referred to as Morton's toe. Having the second toe longer than the big toe may not seem serious, but if not managed, it can put extreme pressure on the head of the second metatarsal – that area at the ball of the foot, at back of the second toe. Patients with Morton's toe can also develop thick calluses behind the second toe and on both the inside and outside parts of the foot where the toes are linked.

A physical examination is usually all that a doctor needs to diagnose Morton's toe, and fortunately, toe surgery is hardly ever necessary. In fact, the right footwear may be all that is needed to manage the condition. If you have Morton's toe, stick to shoes that have wide toe boxes or toe areas. Such shoes are able to accommodate the longer toe comfortably. If you are having a hard time finding shoes with wider toe



boxes, try a simple trick: buy only shoes that are bigger by at least a half size.

If the pain does not subside even after you have switched to more comfortable footwear, it may be time to consult your foot and ankle specialists to have special orthotics designed for your feet's dimensions. Orthotics may be incorporated with arch support features that can help keep your feet aligned. It can also come with metatarsal pads that help decrease stress on the ball of your foot. The right shoes and the right orthotics make the winning formula for immediate relief.

Now that you are in the know about Morton's toe, you can take the necessary steps to keep your toes (and feet) in great shape.

## 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 effect your feet.



## INTRODUCING Summer FAMILY REWARDS

As a patient of Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists, we invite you to help us in bringing others into our family. **When you make referrals, we will reward you with the following:**

**\$20 VISA GIFT CARD FOR EVERY TWO REFERRALS**

**ONE ENTRY INTO A DRAWING FOR THE NEW IPAD2**



\* The American Podiatric Medical Assoc. limits patient referral incentives to \$10

**CLICK HERE TO REQUEST YOUR COMPLIMENTARY COPIES!**

**SIMPLY CLICK HERE** to share the names of friends, family or colleagues you have referred to Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists, and we'll happily welcome them to our family.



## FREE EDUCATION REGARDING FOOT CARE FOR RUNNERS AND DIABETICS

If you know of a friend, family member or colleague that may be interested in learning how to prevent foot issues resulting from running or diabetes, please take advantage of our complimentary books, *Diabetes and Your Feet* and *Keep Running! Identify and Prevent Common Running Injuries*.

Both were written by Dr. Craig Thomajan, founder of Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists.