

FOOTNOTES 2008

NEWS YOU CAN USE FOR SUMMER 2008

Tips for a Safer Barefoot Summer

Going barefoot is one of the pleasures of summer. Whether you're vacationing at the beach, picnicking at the park, or strolling across the backyard, there's something liberating about going au naturel below the ankles.

But bare feet need to beware. Every summer, foot and ankle surgeons treat patients for cuts, puncture wounds and other barefoot injuries. To help you and your family avoid a similar un-bare-able fate, we're sharing some tips for a safer barefoot summer:

Contact our office within 24-hours of suffering a puncture wound.

Why: These injuries can embed unsterile foreign objects deep inside your foot and trap bacteria. A puncture wound must be cleaned properly and monitored throughout the healing process. This will help to avoid complications, such as tissue and bone infections or damage to tendons and muscles in the foot.

Apply sunscreen to the tops and bottoms of your feet.

Why: Feet get sunburn too. Rare but deadly skin cancers can develop on the feet.

Routinely inspect your feet and your children's feet for skin problems.

Why: Going barefoot can increase your risk for athlete's foot, warts, calluses and ingrown toenails. The earlier a skin condition is detected, the easier it is to treat.

Wear flip-flops or sandals around swimming pools, locker rooms and beaches.

Why: To avoid cuts and abrasions from rough surfaces and sharp objects hidden beneath sandy beaches, and to prevent contact with bacteria, fungus or viruses that can cause athlete's foot, plantar warts, and other problems.



Use common sense.

Why: Every year, people lose toes while mowing the lawn barefoot. Others suffer serious burns from accidentally stepping on stray campfire coals or fireworks. Murky rivers, lakes and ponds can conceal sharp objects underwater.

If you or someone in your family has diabetes, take note: People with diabetes should never go barefoot, even indoors, because their nervous system may not "feel" an injury and their circulatory system will struggle to heal breaks in the skin.

By following some simple tips, you can keep your family's bare feet safe from injury this summer. 🍀



Smart shoe shopping for little feet

If you've got school-age children, a trip to the shoe store is probably on your back-to-school to-do list. Shoe shopping is a good opportunity to check your children's feet for common problems such as blisters, ingrown toenails and warts, as well as more serious ones, such as flat foot, heel pain or in-toeing can lead to pain, walking problems and difficulty running and playing sports.

Here are some tips for smart shoe shopping:

For most sports, cross trainers are fine. But if your child is very active in any single sport, buy a shoe designed for that sport. For example, a child who runs in cross-country or track

should never compete in tennis or basketball shoes.

Young girls' bodies need time to mature and develop the proper balance and muscle support to safely wear "adult" shoes. Daughters might make a beeline for the high heels and platforms, but don't give in.

Flip-flops are inexpensive and fashionable. Unfortunately, most of them fail to provide heel cushioning and arch support that your children's feet need. This can lead to pain and difficulty playing sports. If a sandal provides heel cushioning, arch support and fastens securely, it's a better choice than the regular foam flip-flops.

Pay attention to your children's foot complaints. Contact our office if you suspect your child has a possible foot or ankle problem. 🍀

Bunion Surgery FAQs

Here are some frequently asked questions and answers about bunions and their treatment.

Will my bunion get worse?

Because bunions are progressive, they don't go away, and will usually get worse over time. But not all cases are alike. Some bunions progress more rapidly than others.

How can I avoid surgery?

Sometimes observation of the bunion is all that's needed. A periodic office evaluation and x-ray examination can determine if your bunion deformity is advancing, thereby reducing your chance of irreversible damage to the joint. In many other cases, however, some type of treatment is needed, such as changes in shoes, padding, activity modifications, pain medications, icing, injection therapy, and orthotic devices.

When the pain of a bunion interferes with daily activities, it's time to discuss surgical options with your foot and ankle surgeon. Together we can

decide if surgery is best for you.

Is the surgery painful?

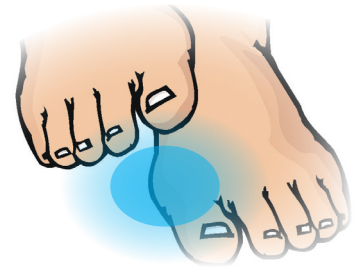
The amount of pain experienced after bunion surgery is different from one person to the next. Most patients will experience discomfort for three to five days. If you closely follow your foot and ankle surgeon's instructions, you can help minimize pain and swelling after your bunion surgery.

What type of anesthesia is involved?

Most bunion surgeries involve local anesthesia with intravenous sedation. That means your foot will be numb and you will be given medications to relax you during the procedure.

How soon can I walk after surgery?

It depends on your bunion and the surgical procedure selected for you. In some cases, you may be walking a few days after surgery. If a more involved surgical procedure is required, it could be several weeks or months before your surgeon recommends full weight-bearing.



How soon can I drive after surgery?

You may be asked to avoid driving for three to six weeks, depending on the procedure selected for you, which foot you use to drive, how fast you heal, and other factors.

Can the bunion come back?

Yes, there is a risk for bunion recurrence in some cases. Patients can help prevent this by following their doctor's instructions to wear arch supports or orthotics in their shoe.

If screws or plates are implanted in my foot to correct my bunion, will they set off metal detectors?

Not usually. It can depend on the device chosen for your procedure, as well as how sensitive the metal detectors are. 🍀