



MCDOWELL PODIATRY GROUP

TREATMENT OF THE FOOT AND ANKLE

News and Updates

November 2017



Neuropathy Know-How

In today's day and age you hopefully don't encounter poor cell phone reception on a daily basis, but you likely know how frustrating it can be to have calls cut out or drop on you. When neuropathy, or nerve damage, develops in the feet, it has similar effects. Interference in nerve signals can cause pain, tingling, or outright numbness, frustrating you and leaving you uncomfortable.

If neuropathy is affecting your feet, we can help you develop an ideal treatment and management plan. This plan may involve some of the at-home tips noted below:

- **Move More.** Exercise can not only improve circulation, which helps maintain nerve health, but can also improve mood and reduce the effects of pain. Make sure to consult your doctor before starting a new plan.
- **Consider a Vitamin B Supplement.** Vitamins B12 and B6 are both beneficial to nervous system health, and having low levels can increase pain. Most people receive enough B vitamins through their diet, but you can ask your doctor whether an additional supplement may be right for you.
- **Stop Smoking.** If you smoke, we doubt we're the first to tell you this. But smoking does have an impact on neuropathy, constricting your blood vessels and providing less blood flow to the nerves in your feet.



Managing neuropathy often requires making changes to both your treatment plan and lifestyle, but we're in your corner to help you find the plan that best suits your needs!



About the Doctor

McDowell Podiatry is very proud to announce the addition of Dr. Stephen Medawar to our family of podiatrists. Dr. Medawar has been a practicing surgical podiatrist in the Sacramento area for over 35 years. For the last 15 years he has served as Associate Clinical Professor at the University of California Davis Medical Group.

He is a graduate of University of California Davis and from the California College of Podiatric Medicine in 1980.

Dr. Medawar's primary focus is to relieve pain and deformity. He believes the practice of medicine should be very personal. He uses drawings, models and pertinent literature to illustrate his patients' condition. During patient discussions, Dr. Medawar provides options for treatment and explains the importance of patients' daily participation in their treatment program.

Dr. Medawar's clinical interests include reconstruction of the great toe joint, surgical biomechanics and conservative treatment to improve function and decrease pain.

Outside of the office Dr. Medawar enjoys the great outdoors hunting and fishing with his family.

Dr. Medawar has a reputation for being one of the finest podiatrists in the Sacramento region. He will join us on July 11, 2016. Appointments for Dr. Medawar are now being taken at 916-961-3434.



Pointers to Prevent Charcot Foot

Diabetes Awareness Month is not just about the drive to find treatments and cures, but also about providing education on proper management of the condition and prevention of serious complications.

Feet are especially vulnerable to the effects of diabetes, and their condition can deteriorate over time to a debilitating and even life-threatening degree.

A common complication with diabetes is Charcot foot, but the good news is that it can easily be prevented:

- **Check Your Feet Every Day.** Poor circulation and nerve damage can mean that injuries and fractures in the foot are not felt, leaving them to grow worse. Inspect both feet every day for signs of redness, swelling, sores, and other abnormalities. If they do not begin to clear up after a couple days, see us right away.
- **Take Care to Avoid Injury.** Even a small cut can lead to a serious ulcer, so be sure to protect your feet whenever possible. This may even include seamless diabetic socks to prevent irritation against the skin.
- **Manage Your Blood Sugar.** Keeping your blood sugar in check is the best way to help keep nerve damage from progressing.

Receiving regular podiatric checkups is another crucial step toward preventing Charcot foot and other nasty offshoots of diabetes in your feet. Our expert staff is here to help; just ask!

Mark Your Calendars

- November 1** National Cook for Your Pets Day – Don't forget the doggy bag!
- November 5** Daylight Saving Time Ends – We're falling back an hour!
- November 10** Marine Corps Birthday – Semper Fi!
- November 13** World Kindness Day – Make another's day!
- November 15** National Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day – If you dare!
- November 23** Thanksgiving Day – Appreciate the blessings in life!
- November 25** Small Business Saturday – Support local!
- November 30** Computer Security Day – When's the last time you scanned?





Benefits of a Warm Bath

With the holiday season and all its preparatory rushing, we won't blame you if all you think about is relaxing with a nice, warm bath at the end of the day. Bathing has its benefits, and you don't need fancy oils or bubbles to take advantage of them.

A warm bath can help improve circulation to the extremities, which is especially helpful against nerve damage in the feet. It can also help lower blood pressure and improve heart function, but careful not to bathe in too high temperatures as that can place excessive strain on the heart.

The nervous system can also benefit from a warm bath, helping decrease inflammation and ease aches and pains. The steam from the warm water and the pressure it places on the chest can also help clear the sinuses and improve oxygen intake.

Plus, the general feeling of stress reduction has widespread effects from head to toe. We won't tell you no against using your favorite soaps and products, but do watch for skin reactions. As long as you are relaxed and comfortable, a nice bath can help wash those troubles away.

Sugar-Free Cranberry Creations

Cranberries are a fall staple, but you don't have to only enjoy them when they slurp their way out of a can and onto your Thanksgiving plate. There are other ways to partake in the tart pleasures of cranberries and all the nutritional benefits they have to offer. Why not wake up your breakfast with a Sugar Free Cranberry Banana Smoothie?

Sugar Free Cranberry-Banana Smoothie

Ingredients

- 1 c. water
- 2 bananas
- 1 c. fresh cranberries
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 c. Greek yogurt, vanilla or plain
- 1 tbsp. ground flax seed
- ½ c. ice
- ½ c. coconut milk
- 1 tsp. liquid stevia, vanilla crème, or other sweetener of choice

Simply combine the above ingredients in a blender and liquefy. Add more ice and blend until smooth, if needed. Almond milk can be substituted for coconut milk. If you desire a thinner smoothie, do not add as much Greek yogurt, or replace with milk.





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What Makes Diabetic Shoes Different?

At first glance, all shoes may look the same; they cover your feet and let you go outside, so is there really any big deal in opting for diabetic shoes instead?

For those whose feet are more vulnerable due to nerve damage and poor circulation, the answer is a resounding "Yes!" Diabetic shoes provide a number of factors to further safeguard feet against injury and sores that can develop into serious ulcers or infections.

Diabetic footwear is designed to relieve parts of the foot that can experience excess pressure, which can cause the skin in those sections to become irritated and break down. General shock and rubbing against the foot is also reduced for the same reasons.

Diabetic patients who suffer from pain in the feet can also benefit from the added stability and support of a diabetic shoe. Keeping joints properly aligned can help lessen pain and reduce inflammation, and the shoe can also help stabilize any foot deformities that may be present.

Not everyone living with diabetes may need a diabetic shoe, but it's important to understand what your feet need at whichever stage of the condition you may be in. Our team can guide you toward the best choices for your safety and mobility.

