



McDowell
Orthopedics
& Podiatry
Group

News and Updates

November 2018

Keep Diabetes from Destroying Your Feet



November is the month of thankfulness, but it's also a month of awareness.

In Diabetes Awareness Month, we pay a little extra attention to the effects of this condition on the body—especially the feet. We say “a little extra” because diabetes doesn't wait for a special month to become a serious factor in someone's life. Awareness is a 365-day-a-year battle!



WELCOME

Dr. Carolyn Winters is excited to join McDowell Orthopedics and Podiatry Group. Originally from Michigan, Dr. Winters is relocating to the area to be closer to family.

Dr. Winters is well trained in both the conservative and surgical management of foot and ankle conditions. She approaches every patient as an individual and strives to deliver great patient care.

She graduated from Boston University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Physiology and obtained her doctorate in Podiatric Medicine and Surgery from Des Moines University. Dr. Winters then went on to complete a comprehensive three-year surgical residency at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, CT.

Outside of the office Dr. Winters enjoys spending time with her fiancé, horseback riding, and exercising. She is looking forward to serving the community.

What Makes Diabetes So Bad for the Feet?

Our feet have a heavy reliance on circulation and sensation in order to perform their jobs well. Unfortunately, diabetes can throw a wrench in both of these things.

As the condition causes damage within our circulatory system, the ability of nerves in our feet to receive the oxygen and nourishment they need from the blood is reduced. The nerves themselves can become damaged over time, ultimately leading to numbness in the feet.

In this state, not only can an injury to the foot go unnoticed, but circulation can be poor as to not provide the cells enough of the tools they need to heal. Even a small cut can grow worse as it continues to be walked on, eventually turning into an ulcer and becoming infected. From there, the dangers can and do become life-threatening!

Keep an Eye on Your Feet

If you have diabetes, a daily foot inspection is crucial to your health. Look and feel along your feet for any signs of injury, discoloration—anything out of the ordinary. If you do find something that doesn't clear up in a couple days or so, give us a call right away!

Do not be afraid to employ the help of a loved one if you can't access the whole of your foot. Tools such as mirrors and selfie sticks can also be useful. We can help you figure out a plan that is best and most convenient for you.

Dealing with Dry, Cracked Feet



Dry feet are a common problem. About 1 in 5 people is believed to have dry feet from time to time.

Part of this is just due to our anatomy. Our feet contain a lot of sweat glands, but not many sebaceous (oil) glands. That means our feet can lose a lot of moisture and not have much in the way of sealing it in.

Dry feet can be a nuisance, but they can also be painful. Cracks that develop in dry skin can not only hurt to walk on, but increase the chances of infection as well. Taking care of dryness and cracks can help prevent this escalation from happening.

Here are a few easy tips for taking care of dryness:

- **Find a good heel balm.** A useful balm will moisturize healthy skin while exfoliating dead skin. Ingredients such as urea, saccharide isomerate, alpha-hydroxy acids, and salicylic acid might sound intimidating, but they are the ones you'll want to look for.

Some minor stinging or irritation may be normal in a balm, especially if you have cracks. Stop use immediately if it continues to bother you or is causing a severe reaction.

- **Apply liquid bandage to cracks.** Usually coming in a spray, a liquid bandage can seal cracked heels throughout the day, helping to prevent against further cracking and exposure.
- **Go to bed in moisture.** When you have a good heel balm or lotion, apply it to your feet at night, then pull an old pair of cotton socks over top. This will allow your feet to remain moisturized without making a mess of your sheets. Petroleum jelly might also be an effective option to use.

If dry feet and cracks are a persistent problem, more advanced treatments may be necessary. Talk with us; we can help!

Mark Your Calendars

- November 1** National Cook for Your Pets Day – The “for” in that is very important.
- November 4** Daylight Saving Time Ends – Fall back one hour!
- November 7** National Stress Awareness Day – What can you do to lessen your load?
- November 12** National Pizza with the Works (Except Anchovies) Day
- November 15** National Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day – You'll need the room soon.
- November 19** National Play Monopoly Day – Hiding money under the board is NOT illegal.
- November 24** National Sardines Day – You may “can” this one if you want.
- November 30** Stay Home Because You're Well Day – Sorry, we can't write you a note.



Is Gratitude Good for You?

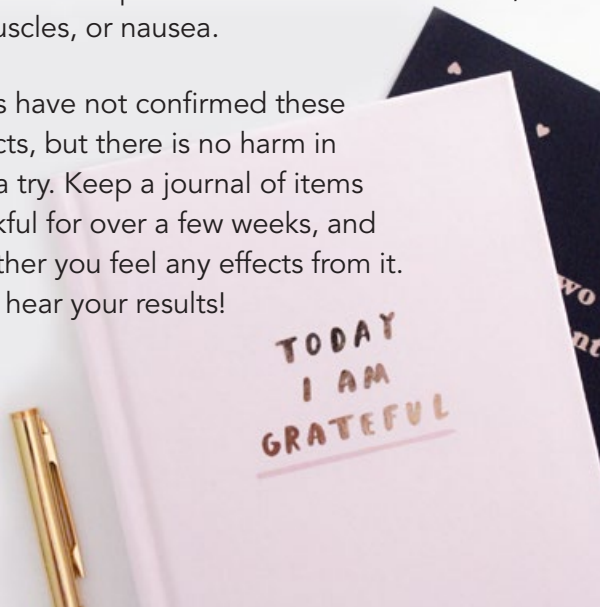
Thanksgiving is considered a time to count your blessings, but it's not always easy to find time if you're the one who's preparing the day!

Aside from that, though, an "attitude of gratitude" is often touted as something that can have long-term benefits to your spirit. But can it also have positive effects on your health?

Studies on the topic tend to be somewhat mixed, but some of the benefits that have been touted in them have included:

- **Better Sleep.** Researchers at the University of Manchester in England found subjects who felt more grateful reported falling asleep faster and having an improved quality of sleep. Taking a few moments before bed to jot down a few items of gratitude could be effective.
- **Improved Workout Commitment.** At the University of California-Davis, study participants reported more motivation to stick to a gym schedule as part of gratitude.
- **Fewer Pains?** A 2003 study in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology had college students maintain an online "gratitude journal" for 10 weeks (one entry per week). They reported fewer problems such as headaches, sore muscles, or nausea.

Other studies have not confirmed these types of effects, but there is no harm in giving them a try. Keep a journal of items you are thankful for over a few weeks, and monitor whether you feel any effects from it. We'd love to hear your results!



Cauliflower Stuffing

Looking for a classic-style Thanksgiving side dish that doesn't involve so much bread? Try this cauliflower stuffing recipe!

Ingredients

- 4 tbsp. butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 large carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 1 small head cauliflower, chopped
- 1 cup mushrooms, chopped
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh sage (may substitute 1 tsp. ground sage)
- ½ cup vegetable or chicken broth

Preparation

- Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat.
- Add onion, carrot, and celery. Sauté until soft, usually 7-8 minutes.
- Add cauliflower and mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper. Cook until tender, about 8-10 additional minutes.
- Add parsley, rosemary, and sage and combine. Pour over vegetable broth and cover with lid. Keep for about 15 minutes until totally tender and liquid is absorbed.



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When is the Time to Treat Fungal Nails? Now!



Fall is in full swing and odds are pretty good you're not wearing open-toed shoes as often as you had during the summer. (Or maybe you are—we won't judge.)

With your feet a bit more concealed from the world, you might be thinking less about a fungal nail infection that has taken up residence. Out of sight, out of mind, right?

Wrong! Do not put off until next season what you could be treating today. If you want clearer nails by the time next summer rolls around, the time to start your treatment is now.

Even when a fungal nail treatment kills all of the stubborn fungus within a nail, it doesn't magically clear up the damage that was caused. The thick, brittle, discolored nail is going to remain until it is pushed out by new, healthy nail tissue.

How quickly do toenails grow, though? About 1.6mm per month, on average. That's about a 16th of an inch!

While in some cases, there can be nail restoration treatments that can hide a damaged nail beneath a well-made replica, the simplest route is to start treatment as soon as possible so that clearness is much more evident in sandal season.

As with any condition, the sooner signs of a fungal nail infection are discovered and treatment started, the more quickly and efficiently that results tend to be seen! Talk with us today about any concerns you might have. We'll be happy to help!