



Fall is The Perfect Time to Talk Fall Prevention

There's nothing like a stroll in the park on a beautiful fall day, with the crisp air and all the colors, but be careful—as we grow older, our risk of falling grows as well and that can seriously impact your health and independence. Now that doesn't mean you should forego your walk completely—on the contrary, exercise keeps your muscles strong which reduces your risk of falling. Just be mindful of where you're walking. There may be roots on the trail hidden by slippery, wet leaves. Choose a course that is clear of such obstacles, or try yoga or Tai Chi which can improve balance along with building strength. Here are some other fall prevention tips to keep in mind:

Know your medications. Some medications, alone or combined with others, can have side effects of drowsiness or dizziness, which can clearly make falling more likely.

Keep a clear view. Be sure to have your vision checked every year to keep your prescription up to date.

Eliminate home hazards. Make sure your house is clear of clutter and other tripping hazards like loose throw rugs, cords, or shoes. You can use double sided tape to secure rugs if you don't wish to remove them or opt for non-slip floor mats. In addition, good lighting is very important. Be sure to use bright light bulbs as well as nightlights. It's also a good idea to keep items you use often in low cabinets to avoid needing a step stool. Finally, install handrails in hallways, staircases, and bathrooms.

Follow these tips and you'll not only improve your chances of staying on your feet, but you'll be much more likely to stay healthy and active, too!



Don't Let Black Toenails Scare You!

This time of year conjures up thoughts of black cats and Dracula capes, but black toenails? They might sound like ingredients in a witch's brew or potion, but black toenails can happen to anyone, even when it's not Halloween!

Typically they occur as a result of trauma—a large object (like a giant pumpkin) dropping on your toe, or a repetitive ramming of your toes against the front of your shoes (beware when running away from ghosts!). However, there's no need to fear the eerie discoloration that ensues. It's simply a collection of blood that pools beneath the nail. Vampires might like the sounds of that, but most people would prefer the condition would just go away! Well, the good news is, many times the black nail will fall off on its own or simply grow out and be replaced by a new, clear one. Sometimes, though, treatment is necessary.

A large amount of pooled blood under a toenail can result in uncomfortable pressure and pain. In addition, the damaged nail bed can be vulnerable to infection. In these cases, a visit with us is advised. We can help minimize symptoms and ensure the return of a healthy nail that's no longer spooky-looking or makes you scream in pain!

Of course, you can take certain measures to avoid the problem in the first place. Keep nails trimmed straight across and even with the tips of your toes. Wear shoes that fit well and give toes plenty of room. Take extra precautions when lifting heavy objects—protective footwear could spare you some monstrous agony.

Want to find out more? Don't be afraid to ask our staff—they're so helpful, it's scary!

Curing Corn Confusion

When autumn sets in, many farmers turn their corn fields into mazes for those seeking some fall fun. If you have the kind of corn found on your feet, however, figuring out the way to go about treating it can be as confusing as following one of those mazes—and that's not fun at all!

Understanding how these thick, hardened layers of skin form is the first step. The culprit is friction and pressure, usually as a result of ill-fitting footwear. In most cases, simply eliminating these factors eliminates the corn. Your best bet? Go shoe shopping! Be sure to choose a pair with a spacious toe box. This is important because unlike calluses that typically form on weight-bearing areas such as the soles of your feet, corns tend to painfully pop up on the sides or tops of toes, and even in between.

If switching footwear is not enough relief, you might want to try pads for an additional layer of protection. There are also topical medications that can help to remove built up layers, and sometimes soaking your feet and using moisturizers can help soften the hardened patches. For stubborn cases, we can pare down or trim the thickened skin, but never try to do this yourself—especially if you have diabetes—since you risk incurring lacerations and opening the door for infection. One final tip? Make sure your socks fit well and are as comfortable as your shoes.

Before you know it, your feet will be feeling great and ready for fall fun after all!

Ask our staff if you want to learn more—they'd be happy to treat you to more tips.



Meet our New Doctor!



Dr. Ripp joined McDowell Podiatry in 2014. He received his Bachelor Degree in Economics at Brigham Young University in Provo, UT. While at BYU, he had additional studies in Spanish and Portuguese. After college, Dr. Ripp obtained his Doctor of Podiatric Medicine from Des Moines University where he graduated in the top ten of his class and was president of the Local Chapter of the Pi Delta National Honor Society.

Dr. Ripp completed a 3-year surgical residency program at Swedish Medical Center in Seattle, WA. This residency program has long been considered one of the elite Foot and Ankle training programs in the United States. During this time, he has worked with some of the top Foot and Ankle surgeons in the country including both the Orthopedic and Podiatric communities.

Dr. Ripp enjoys treating all aspects of the foot and ankle. Special interests include reconstructive lower extremity surgery, sports medicine, and pediatrics. He is a member of the American Podiatric Medical Association and the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons

Dr. Ripp is married and has two children. He is an avid sports fan who loves the outdoors. Born in Texas, he has a passion for BBQ and football.



I Rolled My Ankle!

Did you know that an ankle sprain is one of the most common lower extremity injuries that occur? It is also a frequent reason that one goes to the emergency room. There are several types of ankle sprains. The most common type of sprain is when one rolls their ankle and it hurts on the outside. Some people roll their ankle and are able to walk on it right away. Some roll their ankle and cannot walk due to pain. Often times, they feel they broke their ankle.

RICE – Rest, ICE, Compression, Elevation

If you have an ankle sprain, use RICE to help you recover. Most simple sprains are best treated by these simple steps. Always make sure you have a barrier between the ice and your skin to avoid a skin injury. Often times, an anti-inflammatory is recommended. It is common for swelling to remain for an extended period of time after the injury. If pain continues despite RICE therapy, consult with your physician for further work up.

If you sustain a sprain and are unable to walk due to the pain, you will most likely need more than RICE therapy. Often times immobilization, crutches, physical therapy, and even surgery is needed. For these injuries, it is important to see a Podiatrist as soon as possible.

Did you know that McDowell Podiatry Group has a 24 hour injury policy? We will guarantee an appointment within 24 hours for any trauma or infection.



McDOWELL PODIATRY GROUP

TREATMENT OF THE FOOT AND ANKLE

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“Life Is Not A Dress Rehearsal”

Recently I was in Oregon golfing with some of my friends and met a starter at one of the clubs we were about to play. In talking with him, a retired dentist, we got on the subject of health. He then made the most profound statement when he said “you know life is not a dress rehearsal”. I guess I was in the right place in my mind because it really sunk in as to the true meaning of what he meant. I then looked back at my own life and thought about all the things I would have done differently if I had know then what I know today about food in particular. Being one not to look back I then thought about how many changes I have made particularly in evaluating how much sugar I consume. As many of you know sugar has been a main topic of my newsletters.



Almost daily I remind patients how to read labels when evaluating the quantity of sugar they are consuming every day. If the label says Sugar 4 gm that is the same as one teaspoon of sugar. If the label says Carbohydrates 28 gm that is the same as 7 teaspoons of sugar. When we think of sugar in teaspoons it make a whole lot more sense as I don't think any of us would knowingly eat a teaspoon of sugar. Yes we do have to have some sugar every day, but we would like to keep it around 20 teaspoons if we can. If we do this the weight will fall off and we will all feel better. On that same golf trip one of our members had recently undergone a gastric bypass surgery. Before the surgery he weighed 350 pounds and was a type II diabetic. After the surgery he was told to stop all of his diabetic medications and eat healthy. As I watched him eat “healthy” every day he was consuming a minimum of 100 teaspoons of sugar a day and counting. It will be only a matter of time before he gains all of his weight back and unfortunately will become a type II diabetic.

Suggested readings on topics related to sugar are “Sugar Crush” by Dr. Richard Jacoby and “The Sugar Impact Diet” by J. J. Virgin.