



Tackling Turf Toe

A Message From the Doctor

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Hello Fall, where did the summer go? Inside are some interesting articles on body weight, healthy lunches and big toe pain. Have a great fall and happy hunting!

Get Social w/Us



Fall sports are gearing up and that means there's a whole lot of running, jumping, and kicking going on. Of course, when participating in sports, injuries can happen, and turf toe is a common one. Although it is often associated with turf fields and football players, this sprain of the ligaments surrounding the big toe can occur with other sports as well, including the original football, otherwise known as soccer.

This condition is caused by repeated jamming of the big toe and forcefully pushing off of it when stopping and starting, running and jumping, or changing directions suddenly—all things every athlete clearly experiences, especially in sports like soccer. The nature of these movements, combined with athletic cleats and artificial surfaces, can cause the big toe ligaments to become hyperextended or stretched too far.

If you have pain, swelling, and limited movement in your big toe, stop what you're doing and rest. Ice and medication can minimize discomfort and inflammation, and sometimes "buddy taping" (taping the toe to its neighbor) can help keep it stable as it heals.

Unfortunately, turf toe can sideline you for a while, so to avoid an abrupt end of your season, make sure you have properly fitting, appropriate shoes for your sport, and ask us about orthotics that can help provide additional support as well as correct biomechanical issues that could be putting you at risk. Take that, turf toe!



How Weight Affects Your Feet

Your feet not only hold up your entire body weight, but they actually move it around, too! That's a lot of stress to take and forces to absorb, even at a healthy weight, so you can imagine how excess pounds can really take their toll.

Carrying around an extreme amount of weight can certainly cause feet to become fatigued, but more than this, arches can collapse, heel pads can flatten, and joints can become weakened, leading to flat foot and heel pain as well as arthritis. It's also not uncommon to experience chronic swelling.

In addition, being overweight greatly increases your risk of heart disease and diabetes, and both of these conditions can have dangerous effects on the feet. Diabetic nerve damage can allow injuries to occur without your knowledge, and poor circulation slows the healing process. Because of this, even the smallest of scratches can wind up a serious ulceration and even lead to amputation.

Your feet have a tough enough job as it is – don't make it more difficult for them and put yourself at risk! You can avoid foot issues and other health problems by making a few lifestyle changes, including:

- Eating a healthy diet
- Exercising regularly (start slowly and build gradually; choose low impact activities)
- Wearing comfortable, supportive shoes
- Using orthotic shoe inserts for added cushion and support, and even distribution of weight
- Taking breaks if you are on your feet for extended periods of time

If you need help with any of these measures, just ask! We'll be happy to assist you (and your feet will thank you for it)!

Mark Your Calendars

- September 4** National Peanut Day – go nuts!
- September 17** Constitution Day – Display the US Flag with pride!
- September 22** Autumn Equinox – good bye summer, hello fall!
- October 1** International Coffee Day – Another shot of espresso?
- October 16** Boss's Day – show them how much you care...
- October 31** Halloween – Trick or Treat?





Solutions for a Stiff Big Toe

If you think about it, your big toe has to bend and push off every time you take a step. So, if arthritis sets into the joint causing bones to rub together, spurs to form, and the toe to become stiff, well, that can obviously make walking difficult, much less any of your favorite activities!

This condition is called Hallux Rigidus, otherwise known as a stiff big toe. It can be quite painful, but luckily there are solutions.

Physical therapy can help, as can ice and anti-inflammatory medications. Shoe modifications to accommodate your big toe can be beneficial as well. Look for a large toe box and stiff or rocker-bottom soles that offer support and reduce the amount of bending your toe has to do. Custom orthotics are another option that can help improve foot function as well as divert pressure away from the problem area. If all else fails, there are surgical procedures that can be performed to restore range of motion and ease painful symptoms.

If you have a stiff big toe, let us know! We can help you get back to walking – and whatever else you like to do! – pain-free.



Pack a Healthy Lunch!

Back-to-school means back to packing kids' lunches – UGH! Sure, you want your child to eat healthy, but sometimes that's hard when you're shoving things in a brown paper bag last minute! Not to worry, though. Here are some healthy, fast, and easy ideas to ensure your kids are eating right:

Pre-pack! Making lunch the night before will give you the time to think about what you're putting in it!

Swap and substitute. Use wheat or multi-grain bread instead of white, fresh fruit instead of canned, etc. Sneaky, huh?

Opt for 100% juice. You'll be cutting out all sorts of sugar and they won't even know it!

Set up a grab and go system. Let's face it, you won't always get the chance to pack the night before, but you can take the stress out of a crazy morning by setting time aside on the weekend to cut up fruit and veggies, hard-boil eggs, and bag some pretzels, for example, so they're ready for the taking.

Break out of a rut. If your kid will only eat peanut butter, that doesn't mean it needs to only be between two slices of bread! Spread it on celery or pack apple slices or bananas to dip into it. Got yourself a ham and cheese lover? Roll a piece of ham around a cheese stick, or slice and serve with whole grain crackers. You get the idea!

Have kids sign a no-trading contract! You don't want all your hard work to be traded away for a cookie or a slice of cake! Make a fun contract up for your kids to sign and hopefully it will get the point across.

Okay, now you're ready for whatever the school year brings – at least when it comes to lunch time!



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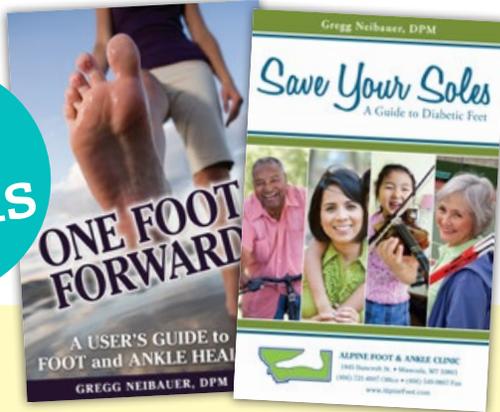
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We want to thank you for referring patients to us. We are very glad that you trust us with your patients, family and friends. Making our patients feel comfortable at our office and healed is most important to our staff at Alpine Foot and Ankle Clinic! Thank you for partnering with us.

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When Tendons Tear

Unless it's popcorn, hearing a popping sound is typically not good! It's a tell-tale sign that a tendon has torn and unfortunately, pain will be following closely – much less enjoyable than a buttery handful of goodness! The situation is especially unenjoyable if we're talking about your Achilles. As the largest and strongest tendon in your body, the Achilles has a big job to do – helping you run, jump, change directions, step, push off, pivot, and basically move. Most of the time, it's up to this

enormous challenge, however, even your Achilles tendon has its limits. Overuse can cause it to weaken, and certain situations can cause it to be tight, until one day it no longer can withstand the stress placed upon it, and it ruptures.

Besides the popping noise, you can expect pain, swelling, and an inability to bear weight – you can also expect a long recovery and rehabilitation, usually following a surgical procedure.

While you can't always prevent such an injury, you can take steps to at least try! Stretching your calf muscles and breaking up high-impact activities like running with lower impact options like swimming and yoga can help keep your Achilles tendon limber and less-stressed. Avoiding hard surfaces when working out and making sure to gradually increase the intensity and duration of your fitness routine can also go a long way toward preventing a tendon tear.

Follow these tips and hopefully the only popping sound you'll hear is from popcorn, and not from your Achilles! Of course, if your tendon does tear, we're here to help!