



SEPTEMBER 2014 NEWSLETTER



BE SMART ABOUT BACK TO SCHOOL SHOPPING

With kids back in school after a summer of bare feet and sandals, parents are shopping for shoes for feet that seem to have grown longer in just a few months. Dr. Craig Thomajan of Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists recommends some simple guidelines to prevent or minimize possible foot problems from inappropriate shoes, such as painful ingrown toenails, blisters and heel pain.



"When choosing kids' shoes, size and shock absorption are the key considerations, especially if your child has flat feet that can worsen from improper fitting or worn-out shoes," said Thomajan, a member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS). "Also, a child's foot can grow a size or two within six months, so it's critical to allow room for growth in the toe box – about a finger's width from the longest toe."

Snug shoes put pressure on the toes, causing ingrown nails. The nail compresses and grows down into the skin. Infection can occur when an ingrown nail breaks through the skin. If there's pain, redness and fluid draining from the area, it may be infected. The ingrown nail can be removed in a simple, in-office procedure. It is strongly suggested that parents do not try to remove a child's ingrown nail at home, as this can cause the condition to worsen.

Tight-fitting shoes also cause blisters, corns and calluses on the toes and blisters on the back of the heels. "Never buy shoes that feel even slightly tight or uncomfortable in the store," said Thomajan "Don't assume they will stretch or break in over time." Conversely, shoes that are too loose can also cause problems, as the foot may slide forward and put excessive pressure on the toes.

Parents should carefully inspect both new and old shoes to check for proper cushioning and arch support. Shoes lose their shock absorption over time, and wear and tear around the edges of the sole usually indicate it's worn out and should be replaced. If a child keeps wearing worn-out or non-supportive dress or athletic shoes, it elevates the risk for developing heel pain, Achilles tendonitis and even ankle sprains and stress fractures.

Contact the Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists team if you have any questions about what shoe may be best for your child heading into the new school year.



Get Ready to Tailgate!

Important Health Tips for Diabetics

The kick-off of high school, college and professional football is upon us, giving family and friends a great reason to spend time together socializing, tossing the football around and indulging in some not-so-healthy pre-game cuisine. Tailgating functions can wreak havoc on your diet, especially for those with diabetes who must manage their blood glucose levels regularly.

Here are some diabetes-friendly suggestions for maintaining a healthy nutrition program during the fall football season:

- Don't arrive hungry to a tailgate, as this may cause overeating. It's better to eat a small snack before you go to help pace yourself during a gathering that may last several hours.
- Plan your meal and/or snack game plan in advance, so that your blood sugar, energy and mood will remain stable.
- Pack your own cooler containing a better and healthier selection of foods rather than relying on spreads provided by friends.
- Stick to meals that will maintain your energy, such as protein-rich dishes, that will make you feel more satisfied. Healthy carbohydrates, starchy vegetables, fresh fruits and vegetables are also a safe bet.
- Stay hydrated. Dehydration can lead to hunger, increased blood sugar levels, headaches and fatigue.
- Avoid high-sodium foods like hotdogs and chips, which cause water retention and affect your blood pressure.

Most importantly, don't forget to pack your blood glucose meter with you at all times.

Drs. Craig Thomajan and Shine John are happy to offer recommendations to you on your next visit to the office, so that you can be prepared to have fun and feel great at your next tailgate.



A Parent's Guide to ATHLETIC SHOES

The new school year means the start of a new season of school and club athletics. Before you head out to buy new sports shoes or cleats for your children, there are a few factors you should consider, according to the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA).

For starters, it is important that you get your child's feet professionally measured by a podiatrist to ensure that you are buying the right shoe. While it's tempting to use the measuring device provided by your local sports equipment store, this informal approach may lead to the purchase of an ill-fitting shoe that does not provide the right amount of support and could result in serious foot discomfort.

When the foot has been properly measured, now it's time to choose the athletic shoe that is best designed for your child's sport of choice. Here is a quick reference guide from the APMA:



FOOTBALL AND LACROSSE

Most Common Injuries – Turf toe and Achilles tendinitis

Proper Shoe Characteristics – Cleats with high ankle support, to accommodate for quick lateral movements and sudden changes of direction.

RUNNING

Most Common Injuries – Plantar fasciitis, shin splints and Morton's Neuroma

Proper Shoe Characteristics – Shoes with shock absorption to help prevent impact-related injuries, and a design to match your child's high, medium or low arch.

BASKETBALL

Most Common Injuries – Sprains, stress fractures and tendinitis.

Proper Shoe Characteristics – Thick and stiff sole that offers support while your child runs and jumps. The shoe should also have a high ankle for added support during quick motion changes on the court.

SOCCER

Most Common Injuries – Ankle sprains, turf toe and ingrown toenails

Proper Shoe Characteristics – Stud-type sole that will be appropriate for the type of ground they will be playing on, whether soft, hard, or firm. Also, the shoe should have no more than one half inch of space between the big toe and the end of the shoe.

The safest way to ensure that you are purchasing the right shoe for your child's sporting endeavors is to schedule an appointment at Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists. Our team will provide a personal foot assessment and give you a recommendation for the shoe that offers the best fit for your young athlete while also providing the best support and functionality on the playing field.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH



My feet regularly ache in the morning when I wake up, but during the day they begin to feel more normal. What is causing this condition?



Foot pain in the morning may be caused by typical tightness and contracting that occurs during a night's rest. In many cases, simple stretching can resolve the discomfort. If stretching does not provide relief, other solutions may include anti-inflammatory medication, custom orthotics or other specialized treatments. Pain, whether in the morning or at any point of the day, is not normal and should be addressed with a foot and ankle specialist.

MEET THE TEAM



**DR. CRAIG
THOMAJAN**



**DR. SHINE
JOHN**

Rhiannon Torrez
Practice Administrator

Byron Cox
Certified Podiatric Medical Assistant

Karin Jung
Medical Assistant

Lindsay Ryder
Medical Assistant

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Clinical Coordinator

Fabiola Carrillo
Clinical Scheduler

Monica Velez
Surgical Coordinator

WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL A PODIATRIST?



You should call a podiatrist anytime you experience pain, discomfort, or notice changes in your feet. Key indicators include:

- You have persistent pain in your feet or ankles.
- You see noticeable changes to your nails or skin.
- Your feet are severely cracking, scaling, or peeling.
- There are blisters on your feet.
- Your toenail is getting thicker and causing you discomfort.
- You have heel pain accompanied by a fever, redness or numbness and tingling in your heel.
- You have diabetes or certain other diseases that affect your feet.

REFERRALS YOU MEAN THE WORLD TO US!

There is no greater compliment you can pay us than to entrust us with the referral of a friend or family member. We'd like to thank the following people for doing so this past month:

Louise P. • Holly L. • Debra V. • Katie R. • Sandra H. • Michelle G.

If you pass along our name to someone close to you, please let us know so we can say thanks!

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS!

Look for a special email in your inbox when your birthday rolls around, created just for you!

If you don't receive your Birthday Greeting and would like to in the future, please visit our Birthday Page and let us know the date!

FREE BOOKS FOR A LIMITED TIME!



Choose from four books offering helpful tips and treatments for diabetic foot care, running, heel pain and general foot pain.

These great resources were written by the knowledgeable doctors of Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists.

[CLICK HERE FOR YOUR FREE BOOKS NOW!](#)

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