

MEET YOUR TEAM

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REFERRALS 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:

- Buckner H. Joyce A.
- Dianne H. Landon O.
- Glenda F. Melissa P.
- Jacquelyn F. Stuart T.
- Jim H.

And a huge "Thanks!" goes out to Christina C. as well.

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 but would like to in the future, please visit our Contact Page and let us know the date!

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

My husband has a favorite pair of sandals that he loves to wear, and he regularly complains about foot pain. Could there be a correlation between the two?

- Kathy D., East Austin

Absolutely. Men's sandals have become so fashionable as an everyday footwear choice that often appearance becomes more important than comfort. The result is common foot issues including heel pain, Achilles tendonitis, pain in the big toe and even breaks and stress fractures in some of the foot's 26 bones. When your husband is searching for his next pair of sandals, it's worth shopping for styles that also offer proper cushioning, supportive soles or padded straps.

VISIT OUR CONTACT PAGE TO SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION and receive your gift of Miracle Foot Cream if yours is chosen to be featured in our newsletter!

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.

FREE EDUCATION REGARDING FOOT CARE FOR RUNNERS AND DIABETICS



If you know of a friend, family member or colleague that may be interested in learning how to prevent foot issues resulting from running or diabetes, please take advantage of our complimentary books, *Diabetes and Your Feet* and *Keep Running! Identify and Prevent Common Running Injuries*.

Both were written by Dr. Craig Thomajan, founder of Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists.

CLICK HERE TO REQUEST YOUR COMPLIMENTARY COPIES!

Friends of AFA CROCS RX DISCOUNT PROGRAM



crocs™_{Rx}

As a member of the Austin Foot & Ankle family, it is our pleasure to invite you to take advantage of the new "Friends of AFA" discount program with Crocs Rx.

Working with Crocs, the maker of the Crocs Rx brand we offer through the Austin Foot & Ankle office and online store, we have developed a program that allows our patients and friends of the practice to receive a 20 percent discount on all purchases.

This is great news for longtime fans of Crocs as well as those who may never have tried this simple, yet amazingly comfortable shoe and the company's special line-up of medical foot products.

Simply visit the Crocs Rx site at www.crocsrx.com/patients.html to begin shopping. Upon checkout, where asked to enter a coupon code, use the Austin Foot & Ankle promotion code 17032308.

CROCS RX – Just what the doctor ordered!



GET YOUR FEET Ready for Spring!

WHILE MANY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TOUTING THE LATEST EXERCISE TIPS TO HELP WOMEN PREPARE FOR SWIMSUIT SEASON, SOME MAY CHOOSE TO INSTEAD FOCUS ATTENTION ON THE LESS STRESSFUL AND MORE FUN TASK OF GETTING THEIR TOES READY FOR SPRING.

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO HELP GET YOUR FEET OUT OF WINTER HIBERNATION AND READY FOR SHOW ON THE BEACH, AT THE SWIMMING POOL AND AROUND TOWN:

MOISTURIZE

It is essential to apply lotion to the feet just as you would your hands and face. Feet can become very dry, especially on the heel, and there's nothing attractive about cracking skin. You can apply simple Vaseline or any milk-based body butter and then pull on a clean white sock so that it can soak in properly.

EXFOLIATE

Getting rid of the dead skin tissue on the feet that has accumulated over the winter is very important, and at the same time you'll be helping to eliminate calluses. Pumice stones, foot scrubs or exfoliating crèmes can all do the trick.

CLEAN UP YOUR NAILS

Having clean feet is the key to having attractive feet. Use a cuticle stick to get under your toenails and gently remove any lint, dirt or other unsightly elements.

CHECK FOR FOOT FUNGUS

While no one ever imagines having foot fungus, it is actually a very common condition. Fungal infections are prevalent during the winter, but can be treated very easily with over-the-counter medicine. The safest bet is visiting your foot and ankle specialist if you feel you may have an infection.

SOAKING

Relaxing your feet in warm water not only feels great, but when essential oils are added, the routine can make a big difference in softening your skin. Some options including adding bath salts, aromatherapy oils, Epsom salt and even milk.

TIME TO PAINT!

Now that the skin on your feet is softer, smoother and generally healthier, it's time for the fun part – adding color. Some prefer clear while others prefer splashy and whether your favorite style is saucy red or bold black, your feet will not only look great, but they will feel great also.



Soccer Season



PRIME TIME FOR FOOT AND ANKLE INJURIES

Now that soccer season is in full swing, it's important to keep an eye out for injuries to your child's feet. Parents and coaches alike are asked to think twice before coaxing young, injury-prone soccer players to "play through" foot and ankle pain.

When skeletally immature kids are starting and stopping and moving side to side on cleats, it's a recipe for foot and ankle sprains or worse. Kids will play with lingering, nagging heel pain that, upon testing, turns out to be a stress fracture. By playing with pain, they can't give their team 100 percent and in the long run it makes their injuries even worse, which prolongs their time away from soccer.

Symptoms of stress fractures include pain during normal activity and when touching the area, and swelling without bruising. Treatment usually involves rest and sometimes casting. More serious stress fractures may require surgery, such as in the elongated bone near the little toe, known as a Jones fracture.

The constant running associated with soccer places excessive stress on a developing foot. Pain from overuse

usually stems from inflammation, such as around the growth plate of the heel bone, more so than a stress fracture. Children's growth plates are still open and bones are still growing and maturing until ages 13 to 16. Rest and, in some cases, immobilization of the foot should relieve that inflammation.

Other types of overuse injuries include Achilles tendonitis and plantar fasciitis (heel pain caused by inflammation of the tissue extending from the heel to the toes). Quick, out-of-nowhere ankle sprains are also common in soccer. If the ankle stays swollen for days and is painful to walk or even stand on, it could be a fracture.

With over 18 million children participating in leagues and programs each year, soccer is the most popular and fastest growing youth sport in the U.S. Not only is it easy to learn, but it's a tremendous form of exercise and is just plain fun. Help your youngster stay healthy on the pitch by keeping an eye out for common foot and ankle injuries this season.

POWER MOWERS POSE DANGER TO FEET



As the grass becomes greener, with it comes the responsibility of keeping a well-manicured lawn. The arrival of lawn season also means a spike in visits to the emergency room from those injured by power mowers.

Each year over 25,000 Americans sustain injuries from rotary blade lawnmowers, with the most common audience being children under age 14 and adults over age 44. Given that the blades of an average lawnmower whirl at 3,000 revolutions per minute and produce three times the kinetic energy of a .357 handgun, it's no surprise that these incidents occur.

Here are a few precautions for anyone who operates a power mower:

- Don't mow a wet lawn. Losing control from slipping on rain-soaked grass is the leading cause of foot injuries by power mowers.
- Wear heavy shoes or work boots when mowing – no sneakers or sandals.
- Don't allow small children to ride in your lap on a lawn tractor. Children can be severely injured by the blades when getting on or off the machine.
- Mow across slopes, never up or down them.
- Never pull a running mower backwards.
- Keep children away from the lawn when mowing.
- Keep the clip bag attached when operating a power mower to prevent projectile injuries.
- Use a mower with a shut-off mechanism on the handle that automatically cuts power when released.