

# FOOTNOTES2006

NEWS YOU CAN USE FOR SPRING 2006

## Think You're Too Old to Get Your Feet Fixed?

Sometimes people in their 60s, 70s, and 80s will tell us that they feel they're too old to bother getting their foot conditions treated. They couldn't be more wrong!

According to a survey conducted by the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, people over the age of 65 who had foot surgery to correct painful foot problems were very happy with the results. They reported that they were more active than they had

been prior to the surgery, and were enjoying social and recreational activities more than they had in the past. In fact, 99 percent of them said that they'd recommend foot surgery to others their age with painful foot problems.

Many people shy away from considering foot surgery because they've heard stories about difficult recoveries from friends or relatives who had surgery years ago. But with

advances in surgical techniques and technologies, less-invasive procedures are now available that can have you back on your feet in a much shorter time period.

A foot problem should not be allowed to keep you from getting the most out of life! You've worked hard all your life, and now you have the time to enjoy it. You owe it to yourself to make sure your feet are ready to take you where you want to go! 🍀

## Kids' Feet Can Keep Them on the Sidelines, Too

Spring is here, and parks and playgrounds all across the U.S. are filling up with after-school youth sports teams. From baseball to soccer and track, some kids are out on the field every day of the week playing one sport or another, and sometimes they even play two different sports in one day!

While physical activity is great for kids, overdoing it can cause lasting problems for their feet and ankles. Bones, ligaments and tendons in kids' feet and ankles aren't fully developed yet, and damage can occur when they are stressed from hours of playing sports. Parents and coaches need to be on the lookout for signs and symptoms of overuse injuries in youth athletes, and to have problems evaluated by a foot and ankle surgeon for an accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

Common overuse injuries that can occur in children's feet and ankles include:

- **Inflammation of the heel's growth plate**, due to muscle strain and repetitive stress. In children, the heel bone is not yet fully developed until age 14 or older. Until then, new bone is forming at the growth plate, a weak area located at the back of the heel.
- **Achilles tendonitis**, occurs mainly in adolescents when the Achilles tendon becomes stressed and inflamed from repeated running and pounding.
- **Stress fractures**, which are hairline breaks resulting from repeated stress on the bone, often occur in adolescents engaged in athletics, especially when the intensity of training suddenly changes.
- **Tendo-Achilles bursitis**, is an inflammation of the fluid-filled sac located between the Achilles tendon and the heel bone. It can result from injuries to the heel, repetitive stress, or wearing poorly-cushioned shoes.

Remember, pain is NEVER normal in a child's foot or ankle! Some kids will insist on continuing to play even when they're in pain. Parents and coaches should never allow this to happen! Continuing to play with an injury can result in problems that may plague the child into adulthood. Any pain that lasts more than a few days, or that is severe enough to limit the child's ability to walk, should be evaluated in our office as soon as possible. 🍀



# Is Pain Keeping You From Losing Weight?

With spring in the air, many of us are heading outdoors to get some exercise. And walking is one of the best, as well as one of the most economical, methods of exercise. In fact, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control tells us that people of all ages benefit from participating in regular, moderate-intensity physical activity, such as 30 minutes of brisk walking five or more times a week.

The latest data from the National Center for Health Statistics show that 30 percent of U.S. adults 20 years of age and older—over 60 million people—are obese. And when we think about losing those extra pounds, a program of exercise walking usually pops into our minds, right?

Of course, exercise walking is difficult, if not impossible, when our feet hurt. And very often, being overweight has contributed to foot problems such as heel pain (plantar fasciitis) and flat feet. So what's an overweight person to do?

If your feet are keeping you from exercising, make an appointment with our office for an evaluation. Very often there are some simple approaches we can recommend that will ease the pain and make it possible for you to get started on your fitness walking program in very short order. In other cases we may recommend a surgical procedure to ease the pain of deformities such as bunions or hammertoes, and we'll be able to suggest alternative types of exercise you can do until your feet are ready to take you out on the walking paths again.

Don't let painful feet keep you from losing weight! Eliminating that pain is the first step in regaining physical fitness and having a more active and fulfilling lifestyle. 🌱

