

FOOTNOTES 2004

NEWS YOU CAN USE FOR SUMMER 2004

Kids Going Barefoot...a Really Bad Idea!

It's a picture of the perfect summer day...children happily eating ice cream cones, wearing shorts and sleeveless t-shirts...and going barefoot. But this scene could be the start of something that may ruin the rest of the summer for one of these kids. When not protected by shoes, feet can suffer a wide variety of injuries while children are enjoying summer activities.

What Can Happen

Puncture wounds are a very common summer injury. Nails, shards of glass, splinters of wood, bits of shell at the seashore, thorns from trees and plants...even carelessly discarded toothpicks or needles can puncture the skin of the foot. And even if you think you've "gotten it all out," when the object is pulled out of the foot, the dirt and bacteria that were pushed into the wound can result in a serious infection. Any puncture wound that has penetrated the skin should be treated in our office within 24 hours. Without proper treatment, this injury can result not only in infection, but painful scarring or development of a cyst.

Traumatic injuries are caused by many types of accidents in the summer. Feet can get caught in the spokes of a bike. They may be hit by a rock or other object that flies out of the lawnmower. A child using a power mower without wearing sturdy shoes is a recipe for disaster. Any traumatic injury should be evaluated in our office to determine the extent of the injury and proper treatment.

Growth Plate injuries are a source of pain for many children. In children, the heel bone is not yet fully developed. Until then, new bone is forming at the growth plate, a weak area located at the back of the heel. Painful injuries can occur to this area when shoes are not cushioning the bottom of the heel and supporting the arch. Any persistent pain in a child's foot should be evaluated in our office.

Sunburn on the feet should not be taken lightly. Shoes will protect the feet from sunburn, but when shoes aren't

being worn sunscreen should be applied...to the bottoms of the feet as well as the tops! Not only is sunburn of the feet very painful, it can also cause skin cancers that often go unnoticed until it's too late.

Wear Your Shoes!

Shoes should be the first line of defense against the many types of foot problems children can encounter this summer. Don't let an injury sideline your youngster and ruin his warm weather fun! ☺

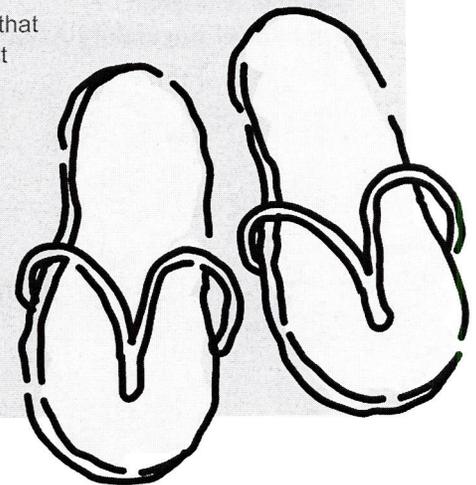
Love Those Flip Flops?

Flip flop sandals in every color, design, and material are popular this summer. Women and kids have been joined in this fashion craze by the men in their lives. These sandals are fun...but shouldn't become the mainstay of your footwear wardrobe.

Too much time spent in flip flops can result in a big pain in your feet. With no arch support, and offering no stability, they cause abnormal stress on the plantar fascia...the band of tissue that extends from the heel to the base of the toes. The resulting condition, known as "plantar fasciitis," or heel pain, usually causes pain in the heel immediately upon arising in the morning, or after periods of inactivity during the day.

Plantar fasciitis can be a persistent problem that takes a long time to effectively treat. The best way to deal with plantar fasciitis is to avoid it in the first place by wearing supportive footwear that provides sufficient shock absorption.

It's not necessary to completely avoid this popular footwear style. But to save yourself from a lot of unnecessary pain, think of your flip flops as your dessert...not the main dish...in your banquet of summer fashion! ☺



Joggers: Does it Feel Like You've Got a Pebble in Your Shoe?

Summer is a great time to abandon the gym and get outdoors for exercise. Jogging is a favorite activity of many fitness enthusiasts. But when joggers feel like something is in their shoe, or that their sock is bunched up under the ball of the foot, they may be experiencing the pain of a Morton's neuroma.

Also referred to as an "intermetatarsal neuroma," this thickening and enlargement of the tissue surrounding the nerve in the ball of the foot is the result of irritation and compression caused by repeated pressure. Female runners are especially vulnerable to this condition, as wearing high heeled, tapered-toed shoes at work and then running on hard, paved surfaces during leisure time is a very stressful combination for their feet.

Early Treatment Advised

Symptoms of a Morton's neuroma usually begin gradually, and may go away temporarily by massaging the foot or avoiding aggravating shoes or activities. Symptoms will get progressively worse over time as the neuroma enlarges and the temporary changes in the nerve become permanent.

If you suspect you have a Morton's neuroma, it's best to come into our office for evaluation early in the development of symptoms. If managed early with treatments such as padding, icing, orthotic devices or medications, you may be able to avoid the need for more invasive therapies. 🐾



Dr. Judge has a unique practice that specializes in complex deformities, chronic pain, the complications of diabetes, sports medicine & related trauma as well as second opinion surgical consultations. She is the first female in Ohio to complete a three-year surgical residency program. Her residency and fellowship training emphasized major reconstructive surgery for the leg, foot and ankle. She is board-certified in reconstructive rear foot and ankle surgery with offices in Ohio and Michigan. Dr. Judge is a Fellow of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons and serves as the Official Foot and Ankle Physician for The Jamie Farr Owens Corning LPGA Classic.