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THE NEXT STEP



Dr. Andrew Schneider

Your first step towards a pain-free life



HOW ARTHRITIS CAN HURT YOUR FEET—AND HOW WE CAN HELP!

With age, you're more likely to develop arthritis. And with 26 bones and 30 joints in each foot, your feet are very susceptible to all forms of this disease. Osteoarthritis (OA), a progressive condition with no known cure often causes persistent midfoot pain even before you notice any other symptoms. Why is that important to know? If we catch OA in its early stages, we may be able to slow progression, reducing your pain and preserving your mobility.

Gout, another form of arthritis, can attack any joints, but the first symptoms are typically felt in your great toe joint, causing redness, swelling and severe pain and sensitivity to touch. While your podiatrist is often the first to diagnose this condition, we work together with other members of your care team to prevent recurrent flare-ups through diet and lifestyle adjustments and, when necessary, with the addition of medications.

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA), an autoimmune disease, first impacts toes and ankles in approximately 20% of patients. Symptoms include painful swelling in your joints, hammer toes or claw toes, bunions and corns—typically, both feet would be equally impacted. And, while there's no RA cure, treatment can prevent or slow joint damage. While we can't cure your arthritis in the office, we can provide significant support. Initially, we can diagnose your condition promptly, providing footwear suggestions that will offer immediate pain relief while helping preserve your mobility. Fitting you for custom orthotics can help stabilize your joints while reducing pressure on impacted areas, again helping reduce pain and prevent disease progression. Finally, we can recommend physical therapy when indicated; medications if necessary and, if advanced disease has caused severe joint damage, we can even offer surgical treatment to get you back on your feet!

RETURNING TO EXERCISE AFTER AN ILLNESS

If you've been out of commission for a while due to illness or infection, you may be itching to get active again. But exercising with caution is key to preventing setbacks in your recovery. First things first: don't expect to pick right up where you left off; you'll need to slowly work your way back to your previous running distances or exercise intensity so you don't get worn out or injured. If you're coming back from a respiratory illness, strength training may be less taxing for your lungs than running, while also helping you rebuild your stamina. But how soon after feeling better should you resume those workouts? The American College of Sports Medicine suggests taking a full rest for 7-10 days after infection because, "When you have recovered, restraint is key when resuming workouts. Jumping right back into a vigorous exercise routine could prolong the time it takes to regain fitness levels, or worse, lead to injury or relapse."



TIME TO USE OR LOSE THOSE HSA AND FSA FUNDS

If you have a Health Savings Account (HSA) or Flexible Spending Account (FSA) you may be running out of time to use your tax-free dollars to cover qualified medical expenses. Not sure what types of expenses can be covered by funds from these accounts? Typically, you can pay for medical equipment, such as custom orthotics; you can also usually cover expenses that are primarily for the purpose of alleviating or preventing a physical disability or illness. As such, you may even be able to use your HSA or FSA funds to cover the cost of regenerative medicine treatments such as Shockwave Therapy or PRP injections that aren't typically covered by insurance. Call the office today to explore what's possible—but don't wait too long, as your unused 2025 funds may not be eligible to roll over into 2026!

ENJOY SOME LIGHT READING—ON US!

Did you know that Dr. Schneider has written a collection of e-books covering a range of important foot health topics. More importantly, did you know that you can download them FOR FREE on our website? Topics range from preventing running injuries to managing ball of foot pain, caring for children's feet, supporting women's foot health, eliminating plantar warts and so much more.

Of course, these valuable resources can't replace an in-office visit if you've got an existing foot problem. But the information inside can certainly help you prevent some painful problems, or at least provide the resources you need to seek early—and, often less invasive—treatment. Check out our [selection](#) today to start beefing up your foot health IQ!



HAPPY HALLOWEEN

SUPER SNACK SUGGESTIONS FOR A HEALTHIER FALL FOOTBALL SEASON

With NFL play in full swing, now is the time to plan a healthier way to snack while cheering on your team, whether you're watching from home or in the stadium. Here are some helpful guidelines to consider:

Before the Game

Eat a filling and nutritious meal, so you won't be as likely to splurge on unhealthy snacks. Also focus on hydration before and during the game. If you're heading to the stadium, and you're allowed to bring snacks with you, consider packing carrots, apples, and other healthy options. If you're watching at a friend's home, consider doing the same—or offer to bring enough for everyone in attendance to enjoy.

Inside The Stadium (or at a viewing party)

Consider all your snacking options before making a purchase—this will help you make a smarter decision. You should also walk to the stand to get your food rather than ordering from your seat—this will reduce the odds of making an impulse purchase, and it will also help you get some extra movement into your day. Finally, keep drinking that water, skipping sugary drinks, sodas or beer—these can all make you crave more sweet treats. Plus, they are packed with calories, but don't make you feel full, so they can be truly disastrous for your diet.



FROM THE DESK OF DR. ANDREW SCHNEIDER

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tanglewoodfootspecialists.com
713-785-7881

