

# FOOTNOTES2008

NEWS YOU CAN USE FOR SPRING 2008

## Travel Tips to Help Prevent Deep Vein Thrombosis

It's that time of year to pack your bags and head off to your favorite destination. But while you're riding in the car or travelling by plane, remember to stretch those legs to help prevent a serious condition known as Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT).

DVT is a condition in which a blood clot (a blockage) forms in vein located deep within the leg. These clots most commonly occur in the veins of the leg, but they can also develop in other parts of the body. If the clot breaks loose and travels through the bloodstream, it can lodge in the lung. This blockage in the lung, called a pulmonary embolism, can make it difficult to breathe and may even cause death.

Certain people are more at risk than others for developing DVT. Some examples of risk factors include varicose veins, blood clotting

disorders, pregnancy or recent childbirth, obesity, and heart disease. People over 40 years old, those who have had recent surgery, or those who are immobile through inactivity or wearing a cast are also more at risk for DVT.

Some people with DVT in the leg have either no warning signs at all or very vague symptoms. If any of the following warning signs or symptoms are present, it is important to make an appointment with our office for an evaluation:

- Swelling in the leg
- Pain in the calf or thigh
- Warmth and redness of the leg

If you have risk factors for DVT and plan on taking a long trip this season, follow these tips to reduce the likelihood of developing a blood clot:



- Exercise legs every 2 to 3 hours to get the blood flowing back to the heart. Walk up and down the aisle of a plane or train, rotate ankles while sitting, and take regular breaks on road trips.
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids; avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Consider wearing compression stockings. 🍌



## Bikes and Swimming Pools: Great Ways to Take the Stress off Your Feet

Many of us have been hibernating indoors throughout the winter months and are ready to head outdoors with the first signs of spring. Biking and swimming are two of the best exercises if you have foot pain. Why? When you ride a bike or swim in a pool, there is no direct impact on your feet while you get a great workout!

With any exercise, it's important to start slowly, and gradually work into a routine. If you notice a sudden increase in foot pain as a result of your workout, call our office for an appointment. 🍌

# Spring into Sports without Spraining Your Ankle

As the weather gets warmer across the county, many of us tend to head outside and exercise with our favorite activity. But don't let the arrival of springtime sports be the arrival of an ankle sprain.

An ankle sprain is an injury to one or more ligaments in the ankle, usually on the outside of the ankle. Ligaments are bands of tissue – like rubber bands – that connect one bone to another and bind the joints together. The severity of an ankle sprain depends on whether the ligament is stretched, partially torn, or completely torn.

Ankle sprains are one of the most common injuries in athletes. Sports that involve quick, sudden movements, such as basketball, tennis, and soccer can trigger these injuries.

Help prevent ankle sprains this spring with these tips:

- Perform exercises that help improve balance, lower leg strength and flexibility.
- Use warm-up stretches and exercises before playing sports.
- Wear the right shoes for the sport. For example, support your ankle by wearing court shoes, not running shoes, when playing sports that involve side-to-side movement, such as tennis and basketball.
- Use an ankle brace if you're recovering from an injury or have repeatedly sprained your ankle.

If you injure your ankle, don't think it's "just an ankle sprain" and hope it will heal on its own. Any ankle sprain



requires prompt medical attention and diagnosis. Left untreated, an ankle sprain can lead to chronic ankle instability. In some cases, an injury may appear to be an ankle sprain when in actuality it is a more severe injury, such as a fracture. Contact our office for an appointment as soon as possible. In the meantime, use **"RICE"** – **R**est, **I**ce, **C**ompression, and **E**levation – to help reduce swelling, pain, and further injury. 🌱

