

What to Do About Nerve Pain in Your Feet

A tingling, burning, shooting sensation jolting through your feet can be quite frightening! Even worse could be feeling nothing at all.

Such sensations often arise from some form of nerve condition or damage in the feet.

The nerves in our feet can be particularly susceptible to problems because of their distance from the heart. It's more of an effort for our bodies to supply blood and essential nutrients to this area. If someone has poor circulation or complications from a condition such as diabetes, the nerves are more likely to become damaged or have problems recovering from injury.

Potential nerve damage in the feet, also known as neuropathy, is not something to ignore. Such symptoms may be signs of a deeper problem that may cause worse complications if not addressed.

The good news is that, once we get to the root of a neuropathy cause, there are usually steps that we can take to help alleviate the pain or manage the symptoms. Such methods may include physical therapy, medication, or nerve stimulation therapies.

In some cases, surgery might be required to relieve pressure against a nerve that is compressed against a bone or harder tissue.

If you have been suffering from strange pains or numbness in your feet, don't wait on it any longer. Let us know if you're experiencing pain today!



About the Doctor

Matt Wettstein, DPM

Advanced Foot and Ankle is led by Dr. Matt Wettstein. Originally from Logan, UT, Dr. Wettstein completed his undergraduate studies at Utah State University before attending Des Moines University in the College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery. After graduating with top honors, he then completed his residency in Salt Lake City, UT. Dr. Wettstein is married and has four, wonderful, children.

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Is My Foot Pain from a Heel Spur?

A heel spur is an odd little condition. If you have heel pain, a spur might be your first idea of its cause. It is an insidious little bony growth on the underside of your heel bone, right?

Well, it can be. But here's the kicker: about half of people who have a heel spur don't feel any pain from it! You might have a heel spur and never even know it—and that's perfectly fine. No harm, no need to treat it.

But if you do have heel pain, what might make it more likely to be a heel spur than another cause, such as plantar fasciitis?

The following factors may increase your risk for heel spurs:

- Gait abnormalities that place excessive force on the heel
- Being an avid runner or jogger, especially on pavement
- Being overweight or obese
- Having a job where you spend most of the day standing

The pain of a heel spur isn't the spur itself, but rather it poking into and irritating the soft tissues around it. The pain has been described as that of a pin or knife against the bottom of the foot, usually when first standing up in the morning or after a long period of time resting. This pain usually transitions into a dull ache.

However, plantar fasciitis is also described this way in some cases, so the best route for addressing any type of heel pain is to have it checked out professionally. Whether it's a heel spur or another condition, we can determine the best course of treatment that fits your lifestyle and needs.

Can Small, Frequent Meals Boost Your Energy?

You know the old adage of three square meals a day being the best way to chow down, but there's a case for spreading your meals out over more, smaller installments if you're an athlete.

According to experts at Cleveland Clinic, athletes or people who have physically active schedules may benefit from more frequent "mini-meals" throughout the day. Keeping a steady, more frequent fueling pattern can help athletes maintain steady blood sugar levels, boost their metabolism, and provide a steady flow of nutrients as long as they're up.

Five or six meals per day, starting with breakfast 1-2 hours after waking and eating again every 3-4 hours, is considered a reasonable plan. Each meal should be small to moderate in size. Meals should be high in carbs and moderate in protein and fat.

If you have trouble feeling full during exercise, a meal replacement shake or smoothie might help avoid feeling bloated.

If you don't have as much time during the week, plan on preparing the bulk of your meals over the weekend. Also stock up on non-perishable snacks such as jerky, protein bars, pouched tuna, and nuts. Keep a variety for the full array of nutrition and to add some variety!

Whatever you do, no matter how active you are, don't skip meals. That's a ticket to decreased metabolism and energy every time.



Hot Mulled Cider

Some people can't wait to get into autumn once September hits. If you're one of them, you'll likely fall for a hot mug of mulled apple cider! You can make some right in your slow cooker!

Note: This recipe is non-alcoholic, but you can add a bit of brandy, bourbon, or rum to your taste.

Ingredients

- 1 gallon fresh apple cider (look for the cloudy, refrigerated stuff)
- 1 medium orange
- 1 piece of fresh ginger, 1.5 inches
- 5 cinnamon sticks, 3 inches each
- 1 tbsp. whole cloves

Instructions

- Pour the cider into a slow cooker that can hold more than 5 quarts.
- Cut the orange into quarter-inch rounds and the ginger into quarter-inch thick slices. Add both to the slow cooker.
- Add cinnamon sticks and cloves. For easy removal, place them in a tea ball before adding to the mix.
- Cover the slow cooker and cook 4 hours on LOW, until flavors combine.
- If you want to remove the spices, strain the cider through a fine-mesh strainer or cheesecloth into a large pot.
- Serve in mugs. Garnish with orange slices, if desired.

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Back to School for Feet!

The start of a new school year is an exciting time (well, based on who you ask)!

If you have a child who has gone back to school, it might be a good time to update their shoes. Young feet grow fast, and having a well-fitting pair of shoes to last through the day can help prevent pain and fatigue.

When shopping for new shoes for a school-aged child, keep these items in mind:

- **Have Their Shoe Sized Measured Every Time** – Like we said, young feet grow fast. Don't assume that your child's shoe size has remained the same since your last shopping excursion. A trained sales associate should be able to provide you the correct measurements you need.
- **Don't "Buy Ahead"** – While your child's feet may grow quickly, buying shoes a size over what they are currently at is not a good idea. Shoes that are too large and slide around on the foot are just as capable of causing problems as shoes that are too tight.
- **Consider Lighter Shoes to Start** – Although it's September, summer is still technically here (and sometimes doesn't know when to leave). Shoes that are lighter and more breathable can help keep feet cool and reduce sweating until fall is officially here.
- **Does Your Child Have Flat Feet?** If so, a shoe with a roomy toe box, arch support and shock absorption can make a world of difference. If your child wears orthotic inserts, make sure they fit inside the shoe!

Good luck finding the right shoes you all can agree on! If you run into any problems or concerns about your child's feet, never hesitate to let us know. The right attention now can prevent longer lasting problems in the future!

