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Lawnmowers and Feet Don't Mix

Keep your feet and those around you safe this summer by using caution when mowing your grass.

Did you know the blades on lawnmowers can spin at 3,000 revolutions per minute and produce three times the kinetic energy of a .357 handgun? Yet, each year our office continues to see patients who have been hurt while operating a lawnmower barefoot.

Take caution when mowing and remember:

- ▶ Don't mow wet grass. Losing control from slipping on rain-soaked grass is the leading cause of foot injuries caused by power mowers.
- ▶ Wear heavy shoes or work boots when mowing—no sneakers or sandals.
- ▶ Don't allow small children to ride on your lap while on a lawn tractor. Children can be severely injured by the blades when getting on or off the machine. Keep children away while mowing.
- ▶ Mow across slopes, never go up or down.
- ▶ Never pull a running mower backwards.
- ▶ Use a mower with a release mechanism on the handle that automatically shuts it off when your hands let go.

If you or someone around you is injured by a mower, be sure to seek treatment immediately. Superficial wounds can be treated on an outpatient basis at our office or at your closest emergency department. More severe wounds may need surgical intervention to repair damage.

Caring for your lawn can be an enjoyable summer experience, just make sure you use caution to protect yourself from injury.



Enjoy the beautiful summer season but be sure to protect your feet and ankles from yard-work injuries and mishaps.



Love Those Flip Flops?

Flip flop sandals in every color, design and material are always popular in the summertime for everyone. But, while these types of sandals are fun, they shouldn't become the mainstay of your footwear wardrobe.

Wearing flip flops too often can result in foot problems. With no arch support, and no stability, flip flops 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," 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 the condition is to avoid it in the first place by wearing supportive footwear that provides sufficient shock absorption.

It's not necessary to completely avoid the 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 summer wardrobe and wear them sparingly.

Protect Your Feet From Skin Cancer

Skin cancer on your feet? Yes, it definitely does occur. In fact, melanoma of the foot is particularly fatal because people rarely think to look for the disease.

Early detection is important, so be sure to check your feet regularly. If you find suspicious spots on the soles of your feet, between your toes, or under your toenails, call our office right away for an appointment.

Think “ABCD” to detect melanoma:

- ▶ *Asymmetry* - The shape of the one half does not match the other.
- ▶ *Border* - The edges are often ragged, notched, blurred or irregular.
- ▶ *Color* - The color is uneven or varies from one area to the other.
- ▶ *Diameter* - Melanomas grow in diameter, whereas moles remain small. A spot larger than the size of a pencil eraser (about 5 millimeters) may be cause for concern.

What's the best way to prevent skin cancer? Wear sun screen, even on the soles of your feet!

