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Keep Your Dancing Feet Happy: Don't Ignore Foot Pain on the Dance Floor

Your New Year's resolution might have you taking up the latest fad in exercise: aerobic dance classes at the gym. Whether you're taking up this new hobby or simply taking your partying indoors for the winter, don't let foot injuries mess up your groove. Being "light on your feet" could result in pain as the hours of dancing ensue. Whether you're doing the twist, the cha-cha slide, a jig or even dancing "Gangnam style," keep in mind that if it hurts to do the moves, there could be an issue at foot.

What's the best defense to protect your feet and ankles?

- ▶ *Wear appropriate shoes to properly support your feet and ankles*
- ▶ *Perform dance moves that best fit your skill level, and sit down if you feel pain*

If you do suffer a painful injury on the dance floor, it is important to make an appointment with our office as soon as possible. Prompt medical attention by a foot and ankle surgeon can make all the difference in proper rehabilitation. Most dance injuries can be treated with conservative care as long as they are not completely ignored. Don't disregard foot pain just because you can walk on it; remember it is possible to walk on a seriously injured foot.



Heed Caution to Kids' Heel Pain

Winter months bring basketball, cheerleading, wrestling and hockey seasons all rolled together. With these school sport seasons in full swing, remember your kids should never "play through the pain" in their feet. Left untreated, a nagging heel pain can lead to difficulty in walking that may require complicated therapy or treatment.

We see more young athletes during this season than any other patient. Kids who have growth spurts could have heel pain starting at age eight until around age 13 (girls) and 15 (boys). The source of the pain is usually the growth plate of the heel bone, since it is continually growing with the body. Overuse, repeated pounding, or excessive weight or force on the Achilles tendon can also cause inflammation and pain.



Help your athlete prevent heel pain:

- ▶ *Use the correct shoe for the given sport, since different sports require various levels of support. Have shoes professionally fitted to ensure proper fit and function.*
- ▶ *Appropriate stretching and warm up for all sports activities should be done to help prevent injury.*
- ▶ *If your child is overweight, help him or her to shed some pounds. Extra weight puts additional stress on the feet.*
- ▶ *Limit wearing cleated shoes to the time actually spent on the field. Cleated shoes do not provide adequate support and may cause increased pressure on the feet.*
- ▶ *Make sure shoes are well-constructed and support the foot adequately.*

Most importantly, don't wait to have your child's foot or ankle pain examined by our office for an accurate diagnosis and to avoid complications.

Start the New Year with Healthy Feet

If you've been putting off having foot surgery to correct bunions or hammertoes, the cold winter months are a great time to concentrate on making your feet healthy.

Many patients appreciate checking the surgeries off of their "To Do" lists early in the year so they can be ready to enjoy the spring weather. In most cases, advances in surgical techniques have made bunions and hammertoes correctable with outpatient surgery and patients return home the same day.

Don't let painful foot conditions slow you down when the weather turns warmer.

Call our office to schedule an examination to determine the best treatment approach and make this your year of healthy feet!

