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## Get Your Feet in Shape for Sandal Season



If bunions, hammertoes, corns, calluses and other foot problems are making you hesitant to go barefoot on the beach or to wear sandals this summer, our office can help your feet look and feel better long before warm weather arrives.

**Bunions** are the most common deformity for which patients seek surgical treatment, both for improved mobility and comfort while wearing shoes and for a better appearance when barefoot or wearing sandals. Depending on the extent of the deformity, bunions can often be repaired with a short postoperative recovery period.

Women who wear tight and pointed shoes are more likely to suffer from bunions because this type of footwear can aggravate the deformity. Seniors with arthritis in the big toe joint are also at a higher risk of developing bunions.

**Hammertoes** can be flexible or rigid and can occur in any of the lesser toes. Ligaments and tendons that have tightened over time cause joints to buckle and, depending on the number of toes affected, recovery can take several weeks.

People with hammertoes often have **corns** due to the tops of the bent toes rubbing against the inside of shoes. The corn, named for its resemblance to a corn kernel, forms from repeated pressure on the skin. Never remove a corn at home or by using medicated corn pads, as this can cause serious infection. Our office can recommend the most appropriate treatment option for you.

**Calluses** differ from corns but are also caused by pressure and repeated rubbing on the skin, such as from a shoe or sock. This rubbing causes the skin to produce a callus or a layer of protective skin. Calluses vary in size and can become painful. Performing “bathroom surgery” on calluses can lead to cuts and infection. Contact our office instead so we can determine the underlying cause of the callus and recommend treatment.

## Beat the Heat with Healthy Summer Feet

Summer is the time for picnics, pool parties and playing outside—not foot pain. Follow these ten tips for keeping your feet pain-free this summer:

- 1. Don't walk barefoot.** Your feet can suffer cuts and puncture wounds that can become infected.
- 2. Apply sunscreen to your feet** to protect against sunburn and skin cancer.
- 3. Wear socks.** Bare feet inside of shoes can lead to athlete's foot and other fungal infections, blisters and calluses. Change socks throughout the day when necessary to keep feet dry.
- 4. Don't pop blisters.** These are a natural barrier to infection.
- 5. Don't fall for fashion trends.** When buying sandals, make sure they provide arch support and heel cushioning.
- 6. Wear larger shoes** to accommodate swollen feet, especially if you work outside.
- 7. Clean and disinfect** spider and ant bites to avoid infection.
- 8. Stay hydrated** to avoid leg cramps and muscle spasms.
- 9. Warm up and stretch** before exercising and cool down and stretch afterward. This will help prevent injuries to the Achilles tendon and plantar fascia.
- 10. If your feet hurt, come see us.** Foot and ankle pain shouldn't be ignored. If pain persists after three days of rest, schedule an appointment with our office.



# Protect Your Feet from Lawnmower Injuries

Lawnmower blades can spin at 3,000 revolutions per minute and can produce three times the kinetic energy of a .357 handgun. Take these precautions when mowing your lawn this summer to keep your feet and those around you safe:

- Never 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, sandals or bare feet.
- Keep children away while mowing and never let them ride on a lawn tractor. Children can be severely injured by the blades as they get on or off the machine.
- Mow slowly across slopes and never go up or down.
- Never pull a running mower backward.
- Use a mower with a release mechanism on the handle that automatically shuts it off once your hands let go.

**If you suffer a lawnmower injury, seek emergency care immediately. Afterward, make a follow-up appointment with our office.**



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