



February 2018

News and Updates

Welcome to Burlington County Foot and Ankle Associates, Inc.! The mission of our practice is to provide that hometown-country doc customer service in a modern, high tech medical world. Join us so we can keep you walking.



Dr. John DePalma, D.P.M.

Dr. DePalma has been part of Burlington County Foot and Ankle Associates, Inc. for more than 20 years. He is committed to providing top-notch care to his patients and makes house calls on Fridays for his patients who are homebound.

Dr. DePalma's desire to become a doctor began in the 7th grade when he read a book about yellow fever and the Panama Canal that sparked his interest in medicine. He was first introduced to podiatry in high school while running cross country track. Some of his teammates had shin splints and heel pain from running and had seen a podiatrist who had instructed them to have a teammate learn a taping technique and apply it before every practice. Dr. DePalma excelled at taping and this ignited his passion to study sports medicine and podiatry.

Get to Know Dr. DePalma

Favorite Book: The Slight Edge by Jeff Olson (non-fiction). For fiction, I will read anything by Greg Iles.

Favorite Sport to watch: Football

Favorite Sport to Play: Soccer

Favorite Sport I Miss: Running

Favorite Restaurant: Any of the local greats like Rustic Grille, Rivera Pizza, Shamong Diner, Femmina, Tarantella's. My all-time favorite for both my wife and I is Graziano's Restaurant in Chesilhurst, NJ.

What is the most enjoyable part of your job? Being able to help someone walk out of the office with no pain.

What are some small things that make your day better? Great conversations about all types of topics.

How do you relax after a long day at work? I watch a movie – usually one I've seen a hundred times. This way, if I fall asleep, I won't be missing anything.

Healthy Rules for Wearing High Heels



We probably don't have to tell you that wearing high heels can be a pain. Not only can an extended amount of time in them be uncomfortable, they can also contribute toward worsening conditions such as bunions, hammertoes, and Achilles tendon problems.

The best way to wear heels is not at all, but we know that's out of the question for many. If you must wear high heels, following these tips can help reduce the consequences:

- **Wear thicker heels.** A stiletto may be chic, but it's also unstable. Thicker heels provide better balance and more properly distribute the weight of your foot.
- **Opt for a snug fit—but not too tight!** The way heels slope, giving your feet too much room to slide will mean slamming your toes against the front of the shoe repeatedly, adding to pressure and pain. Another way to help prevent toe crunch? Open-toed heels.
- **Stay low.** Try to keep your heels beneath two inches. If you have to wear higher, only use them for a few hours at a time.
- **Provide yourself some after-heels care.** Take some time after taking off your heels to massage your feet and stretch. A nice, easy stretch for your calves will also help your Achilles tendons.

If your feet are still hurting even when the heels come off, it's time to get some help. Knowing what kinds of shoes you wear most frequently can also prove a big help during any podiatric exam as well! We can help you find the best alternatives for your comfort. The Copley High Heel Orthotic can significantly improve the comfort of high heels while preventing some of the common problems that occur when wearing heels. If you wear high heels frequently, ask Dr. DePalma to help you ease the suffering.



How to Give a Great Foot Massage

Whether your relationship is at the stage of lavish romantic escapes or simply wanting to fall asleep in front of Netflix together, there is one gesture that often seems to garner plenty of appreciation: a foot massage.

If you want to surprise your loved one with a next-level massage, try these steps:

- Before you begin, make a nice, warm footbath. Add some aromatic oils. You could even add citrus slices to rub against the feet to help soften the skin.
- Prepare your lap with a pillow wrapped in a soft towel. After the feet are dry, work on each foot separately. Hold the foot by the heel, then gently rotate the foot in a circle—three turns one way, three turns the other. Repeat with the toes.
- Squeeze some foot cream or oil onto your thumbs and place them on the center of the foot arch, right below the ball of the foot. Rub in small circles with light pressure, each thumb moving in an opposite circular direction. Follow by shifting your thumbs up and down the length of the foot, with firm pressure, each thumb starting on opposite sides.
- Squeeze every toe lightly, then make small circular motions beneath each toe.
- Move to the ball of the foot, making small circles with the thumbs in opposite directions, up and down the sole. Add extra pressure near the heel.
- Finish by gently squeezing the area below the ankle for a few seconds, or gently rub the Achilles tendon. You can always do both!

As with any sort of treatment like this, results may vary depending on your partner's preferences. Listening to them is one of the most important parts of the massage!

Warm Feet Are One Step Closer to A Healthy Body

When the temperatures are dropping, warm cozy socks are a wardrobe staple. It's more important than simply having the right socks though, toasty toes are also beneficial to your health.

Feet don't have a lot of muscle but they do have a lot of blood cells so warming up the feet can quickly warm the rest of your body. Merino wool socks can protect feet against cold and help the rest of your body feel more warm and comfortable. The right socks will also keep your feet dry and can protect against cold-related foot conditions such as trench foot or frostbite.

If you already have an underlying condition like diabetes, poor circulation or Raynaud's phenomena, cold feet can complicate many foot problems. Diabetics need to pay special attention to their feet in the cold as decreased sensation may cause problems like ulcers or infections to go unnoticed.

Warm feet aren't just a luxury this winter, they are a necessity for your health and comfort.



Help for Dry, Cracking Skin

Winter can be a dry season in many places, and our feet are especially susceptible to drying out for many other reasons, too! For one, our feet contain fewer oil glands than anywhere else on our body, meaning less natural oils to keep skin soft and moisturized. Weight, age, medications, and health conditions can also contribute to your feet feeling like a barren landscape.

Feet that become overly dry are more prone to painful cracks and fissures as well. Taking some time each night to treat your feet, however, can help resolve dry, cracked skin.

Before bed, soak your feet for about 20 minutes in a small tub filled with warm water and liquid soap. Use a pumice stone (gently—it should not hurt!) to exfoliate loosened, dead skin cells. Then simply rinse off and pat dry with a towel.

Once cleaned off, apply a moisturizing foot cream or petroleum jelly generously to your feet. Cover them in a pair of old socks to both lock in the moisture and keep from making a slippery mess! Keep the socks on overnight, then wash your feet off again in the morning. If you can't stand to sleep in socks, or you are pressed for time, try a pair of moisturizing gel socks worn for 15 to 20 minutes. Moisturizing gel socks are available in our office and are the perfect way to rejuvenate tired, stressed feet.

The above nightly routine can begin to show results in several days. If the problem doesn't show any improvement, or your feet are too cracked and painful, please see us. You may have an underlying problem or need advanced treatment!



Tips for Tasting New Chocolates

It's one of the sweeter times of the year. And while we don't normally condone a sugary diet, there are some occasions when you might want to experience something new. You and your doctors know your limits, of course, so please practice the proper amount of moderation!

If you're going to try some new kinds of chocolate this month, though, why not try tasting them like a pro? Chocolate has more than 400 distinct flavor components, so slow down and savor them.

Try heading somewhere quiet, both in terms of sounds and smells. Have some water or bread handy to cleanse your palate if you're trying more than one kind.

There's plenty to experience before tasting! Take in the aroma and look for a glossy appearance to the chocolate. Break a piece off, which should provide another good dose of aroma. Savor that, as well.

Now taste! Place a small piece on your tongue, but do not chew. Let it melt over your tongue and release its flavors. You may be surprised at how the taste changes if you pay attention!

A small piece of chocolate may take you quite a ways, so don't rush it. And don't feel like you need to consume the entire bar at this time, either (We might want some!).





520 Stokes Road Suite C-5
Medford, NJ, 08055
609-714-0052
www.KeepUWalking.com



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Did I Break My Toe?

There come those moments in life where time seems to freeze and you wonder if you have had a great calamity befall you. One of these moments tends to happen when one of your toes comes into great force against an unyielding end table. Once the hobbling waves of pain have ended, and you have time to think again, there comes the question: did I break my toe?



It can be surprisingly difficult to determine whether you have broken your toe or just badly hurt it. Pain for both injuries can be similar. It is always best to consult us if you feel you might have broken a bone in your toe, but here are a few signs that point toward a fracture:

- A bent or crooked appearance
- Persisting pain and tenderness
- Stiffness
- Swelling

While a broken toe often doesn't need anything more than a period of immobilization to heal, a toe that does not heal properly is more prone to chronic pain and issues such as arthritis in the future. Watch your feet in the dark, but when one of those time-freezing moments does happen, don't hesitate to give us a call!