



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.



Why Do Wart Myths Persist?

Unightly and uncomfortable warts have long been an affliction of legends and tall tales. Can you get them by touching frogs or toads? Can you get rid of them with yogurt, pennies, or duct tape? Why do myths about warts keep perpetuating?

To get to some ideas why, it helps to ensure what warts actually are. A wart—whether it's a plantar wart on the foot, a palmer wart on the hand, or just a plain old wart anywhere else—is the result of a viral infection. Once this virus enters the skin, it causes a quick growth of cells on the outer layer of the skin. This is the wart.

While warts can occasionally be painful, they are otherwise harmless in a vast majority of cases (very few cases end up cancerous, and most of these are not on the feet and hands). Warts may also go away on their own over time. Some can be gone in as few as 10 weeks, while others may take up to 2 years or not go away at all!

So why the myths? We're not saying there might not be something in your aunt's honey-sage spread that may help clear warts. But if you're trying a home remedy and a wart goes away on its own, for unrelated reasons, you might be inclined to believe that did it. It's only human nature to.

As long as you're not hurting yourself, trying a remedy for warts is likely not a problem. But if your warts persist, you have reason to believe something more is wrong, or you're just plain sick of seeing them, contact your friendly local professional.



Exercise Smart to Prevent Overuse Injuries

As much as a hyped up, '80s music-fueled training montage might make it seem, going "all out" is not the wise way to pursue your fitness goals.

Our bodies react to the stress and exertion we place on them by growing stronger and more efficient—that's what working out is all about. However, this exertion must start out lightly and be gradually ramped up over time. Place too much stress on the body before it can properly handle it and you risk overuse injuries such as Achilles tendinitis and stress fractures.

Here are some general tips for staying active while avoiding overuse injuries:

- **Get Checked Out Before Starting a New Regimen** – If you plan on picking up a new exercise such as running, cycling, or swimming, get a physical before doing so. Your doctor can detect muscle imbalances and other factors that may increase your risk of injury.
- **Warm Up and Cool Down** – It might seem trivial, but 5-10 minutes of stretching before and after a workout can make a difference in maintaining your body.
- **Gradually Increase Your Intensity** – Start simple and build up your workout level no more than 10 percent each week. This may involve running just a bit further or lifting just a bit more weight. Don't tempt yourself to beat others; go at your own pace.

Slow and steady may not always win the race in real life, but it will keep you from getting sidelined! If you have any questions about exercise levels or pain you experience during exercise, please let us know. We'll help you stay in action!

Are You Ready For Flip Flop Season??

The correct answer is ... NO.

Podiatrists agree that flip flops do more harm than good when it comes to your feet. There are numerous reasons to say bye-bye to your favorite summer shoe. Flip flops leave your feet exposed to bacteria, fungus and viral infections, especially when they are worn in public places and your feet get filthy. To make matters worse, most people get a pedicure before wearing flip flops and micro-wounds caused by exfoliation can be enough of an opening for germs to get in and wreak havoc on your feet.

With only a thin band holding the flip flop in place, toes have to work extra hard to keep the shoe in place which can exacerbate chronic foot problems such as hammertoes and bunions. Flip flops' inherent lack of support cause a tendency to take shorter steps which makes most people extra clumsy. Shortening your stride also affects the body's biomechanics and over time can cause knee, hip and back problems as your joints compensate for the lack of arch support.

If you're going to the beach and just can't break up with your flip flops, exercise moderation – and of course, we are here to help if your flip flop-wearing goes wrong and causes any of these problems!



Exercising with Your Children Isn't Just Good for Them

Many children nowadays spend a lot of time sitting in front of the TV, in a classroom, or in a car seat. But then again, many adults spend a lot of time sitting in similar situations. When family time comes, some active ideas can make a significant difference to members young and old.

Exercise doesn't always have to mean running laps or pumping iron. There are many lower-key ways of getting more movement into the lives of you and your little ones. Try some of these to see what everyone likes:

- **Take a Walk Before or After Dinner** – With a long day of work or school over with, a walk as a family can do wonders for body and mind. Younger children can alternate time in and out of a stroller, while older children can engage in some stair climbing or “I spy” kinds of games.
- **Turn Commercials into Mini Workouts** – Make these breaks work for you by engaging in some quick sit-ups, squats, or jumping jacks. Someone in the family can yell out exercise orders each break for more fun.
- **Sign Up for Charity Races and Other Active Events** – Volunteer events that are both fun and active can help instill a sense of community in children (and parents, too!) while keeping you moving. You don't have to be a trained runner to participate in many area 5K walks or fun runs.

Slow and steady may not always win the race in real life, but it will keep you from getting sidelined! If you need help getting started, join us on Friday mornings at our office at 9:00 a.m. for our Keep U Walking Club. We will start off slow with a comfortably-paced 1.5-mile walk around town. If you have any questions about exercise levels or pain you experience during exercise, please let us know. We'll help you stay in action!



How to Make Pancakes Healthier

We know that pancakes are not a dish we could take away from many fans. They'd tell us to pry the syrup from their warm, sticky fingers! While white flour and sugar don't tend to be the most beneficial choices for a healthy diet, a few decisions can make this classic plate better for you.

Here's how to hack your flapjack:

- **Go Homemade** – Those boxed mixes don't give you much control. Toss 'em and go homemade instead! Recipes don't take long: usually about 5 minutes to whip up what you need.
- **Add Oats to Your Batter** – Both rolled and quick oats are effective additions, especially if you like soft and chewy textures.
- **Replace Eggs with Mashed Bananas** – Instead of an egg, mash up a banana with a fork and add it instead. We probably don't have to tell you this will add banana flavor.
- **Replace Fat with Applesauce** – This is one of the better known tricks, but still effective! If you need half a cup of oil, use half a cup of applesauce instead.
- **Replace Syrup with Maple Yogurt** – 3 ounces of plain Greek yogurt with a teaspoon of maple syrup mixed in can be a delicious substitute for syrup alone, and replace plenty of empty calories.

Experiment with different mixes until you find what you like. Viva la pancake!





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Do You Have a Pinched Nerve?

We might not always be aware we're in a pinch in life until it's too late, but signs of a pinched nerve can be *much* easier to detect.

Nerves are sensitive instruments, so when something begins to place excessive pressure on one—such as a bone, tendon, or scar tissue, it will tend to have a response. Injuries, arthritis, repetitive work motions, and extra weight can all be risk factors for nerve entrapment.

Patients with a pinched nerve might describe the sensation differently. It all depends on what kind of nerve is being affected and how. In some cases, you may feel numbness or a decreased sensation. In other cases, you might feel a sharp, aching, or burning sensation. Muscles might also feel weak in the area, and you might also get a frequent feeling of "pins and needles" or that the area has "fallen asleep."

In many cases, nerve problems are said to feel worse during sleep. Just brushing the bedsheet can cause pain or abnormal sensations at times.

Some instances of a pinched nerve will clear on their own with rest, but others will require treatment or surgery. Please let us know if pain or numbness have persisted in your foot or ankle for more than several days. The sooner a problem is discovered, the more effective treatment can be!