



October 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.

Don't Stress Over Stress Fractures

The term "stress fracture" is enough to cause some anxiety, and its painful effects on your activities is surely not relaxing, either.

But if you're going to recover from these tiny cracks along the surface of a bone, you'll need to relax.

As the name implies, a stress fracture is usually caused by too much force being placed on the foot or ankle. This tends to be the result of either increasing the intensity of an activity beyond what the body is currently able to handle, or repetitive stress that has not allowed the body proper time to recover.

Our bones are fantastic structures that are capable of building themselves back and stronger than before, but keep the pressure up without giving yourself enough time for your body to heal and a stress fracture can happen!

Recovering from a stress fracture means letting your body catch up on its repairs and then some. Yes, that will likely mean reducing or postponing the activities you love. The alternative, however, can be worse. Continuing to pressure a stress fracture may make it worse and lead to long-term pain and injury.

So, if a stress fracture or other cause of pain has cropped up during your activities, let us know. We can help you not only get back to moving faster, but help you find the best ways to prevent such injuries from happening again!





Making a Safer Home for Feet

Home is where the heart is; and it's where many of the people you love reside, as well!

If you are caring for an older individual or someone who might have problems with balance and stability, you want their home to be one that reduces risks of falls and injury. Even if someone feels confident where they live, the home remains where most accidental falls occur.

There are some easy steps you can take to help lower the risks of such an accident happening in the home. It's all about having a watchful eye:

- **Eliminate obstacles.** Cluttered hallways and corners should always be kept clear of obstacles, especially anywhere on or near staircases.
- **Provide handrails and bars.** Staircases and bathrooms are a must for these simple but saving devices. Make sure they are securely installed, and ask for the help of an experienced contractor if you doubt your confidence in installing them yourself.
- **Fix potential hazards.** Sometimes, parts of the home itself can be in enough disrepair to increase the risk of a fall. This can include loose carpeting (and don't forget that rugs may also cause problems), uneven floor boards, and other fixtures that can become obstructions.
- **Increase visibility.** Well-lit areas are less likely to be the scenes of accidents. Install brighter bulbs where needed and add night lights in areas that may receive traffic at night (such as in bathrooms, and between bathrooms and bedrooms).

Further precautions you can take may depend on the specific needs and conditions of those in your home. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the roles of foot problems and stability in keeping your loved one's safe, never hesitate to bring them up with us.

Mark Your Calendars



Cancer touches so many. We are passionate about helping others and every year as an office we walk in the **Making Strides Against Breast Cancer** walk at Cooper River Park in Pennsauken. We invite all our patients, family and friends to walk with us on October 28 in support of those who are fighting cancer and in memory of all loved ones that have been affected by this disease.

How Often Should You Wash Your Hair?

You might have grown up with the expectation that you should wash your hair each and every day. Or maybe you just like the feel of lathering up with your head beneath a cascading shower head. Those “rain” style ones are really nice.

But is it truly best to shampoo yourself up every day? That can vary depending on your hair.

According to Cleveland Clinic dermatologist Shilpi Khetarpal, our scalps naturally produce oil, which keeps our hair healthy and moisturized. If your glands don't produce as much oil, washing it out too often can lead to dry, dull, brittle hair.

Younger people tend to produce the most oil, so they tend to be better suited toward more frequent hair washing. As we become older, however, our oil production tends to drop. Women following menopause tend to notice this first, but men eventually find this to be the case, too.

Sheer volume and length of hair can also play a factor, too. The longer your hair, the more your oil is tasked with covering. The tips of hair tend to suffer first, and should be the target of conditioning (as opposed to your roots).

The best timetable for washing your hair will differ from person to person, but signs you are washing too much include the aforementioned dry, brittle hair as well as a dry and itchy scalp.

And if you exercise a lot? That actually shouldn't change your hair washing much, according to Dr. Khetarpal. You don't always have to wash your hair after a workout.



Squash Soup in Pumpkin Bowls

If you're in the mood for your pumpkins to hold more than candles or candy, try this recipe on for size.

Bowl Ingredients

- 4 small baking pumpkins, acorn squash, or sweet dumpling squash
- 2 tsp. sugar
- Kosher salt

Soup Ingredients

- 3 tbsp. unsalted butter
- Half a small onion, chopped
- Kosher salt
- 2 sprigs of thyme
- 1 medium butternut squash (about 2 lbs.) peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 tsp. sugar
- Optional: 3 tbsp. heavy cream

Bowl Instructions

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
- Cut a large circle around the stem of each gourd with a paring knife. Remove lid and scoop out.
- Sprinkle the inside of each with ½ tsp. each of sugar and salt.
- Place the pumpkins and lids on a baking sheet and roast 20-35 minutes, until tender.

Soup Instructions

- Melt butter in a large saucepan over low heat.
- Add onion and 1 tsp. salt.
- Strip thyme leaves into the pot.
- Increase heat to medium and cook about 5 minutes, stirring until onion is soft.
- Add squash and sugar.
- Cook, stirring, for 3-4 minutes, until glazed.
- Add 5 cups of water and bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat to low and simmer, uncovered, for 15-20 minutes, until squash is tender.
- Transfer soup to a blender in batches. Keep lid cracked to let steam escape and purée until smooth.
- Return to saucepan and stir in heavy cream, if desired. Season with salt and pepper, and add toppings such as croutons, paprika, chili powder, ham, or bacon as desired.





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Things that Go Bump on Your Foot

When you're a doctor of any kind, you just come to expect someone asking you what a strange lump is somewhere. And we're glad patients do! Keeping an eye on your body is an essential part of discovering problems and addressing them before they become more serious. It's always better to check something out and have it be nothing to worry about than to overlook something that is!

So, if you find a mystery lump on your foot (we're talking something whose identity isn't pretty obvious, like a bunion), what could it be?

The most common cause of a bump or lump appearing on the foot is a ganglionic cyst. This is a small, soft, fluid-filled sac that forms near a joint or tendon. It's most commonly found on the top or side of the foot, or close to the ankle joint.

While a ganglionic cyst is not cancerous, it will usually not go away on its own and must be drained. Even then, the fluid within the cyst can refill if the entire thing is not surgically removed.

Unfortunately, there is always the possibility that a lump can be cancerous. If there is reason to suspect something might be malignant, we may recommend a biopsy and other tests to help determine what exactly we are dealing with.

If you have a lump on your foot that has not gone away after a few days, it is always best to have it examined sooner than later. Not only will addressing the problem sooner often lead to more effective treatment, but having the peace of mind of knowing what something is or is not can be very powerful to your emotional health.

Never be shy if you want us to look at something. We always want you to speak up!