

NorthPointe Foot & Ankle
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Meet Our Team!

LESLIE MIERTL

Leslie Miertl has been at NorthPointe Foot & Ankle for three years. She is an important member of our front desk team.

Leslie may be the smiling face that greets you at the office, the helpful voice on the phone answering your questions, or the woman you see diligently updating and prepping files for office visits.

Making sure your information is up to date and ready for the doctor to review is her priority.



When not at the office, Leslie spends time with her husband and three daughters: Tiffany, Ashleigh and Reilly. She also enjoys going for long walks with her dogs Duke and Lucky.

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NorthPointe News

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FOOT HEALTH AWARENESS

Our feet are the foundation of our body. Problems in our feet can cause problems throughout our body. Examining our feet can also help identify symptoms of other serious diseases such as vascular disease and diabetes. Due to the importance of foot health, the month of April has been designated Foot Health Awareness Month. This is the perfect time to determine what shape your feet are in.

Our feet need to last a lifetime and most Americans log an amazing 75,000 miles on their feet by the time they reach age 50. Aging and repetitive use lead to normal changes in your feet and keeping up with those changes is important to ones' overall health and wellbeing. Your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle physicians are doctors of podiatric medicine and are uniquely qualified among medical professionals to treat the foot and ankle based on their education, training and experience. Our podiatrists are here to identify changes, normal and irregular, and support their findings with suggested action or treatment.

Normal changes to the foot include:

- The foot becomes wider and longer
- There is mild settling of the arch which is seen as flattening of the foot
- The fat pad on the bottom of the heel thins out, causing loss of natural padding and spring in the step
- The foot and ankle lose some of their normal range of motion and become stiffer
- There can be some loss of balance while walking

As these changes occur, shoe sizes and support needs change and must be addressed.

Some foot changes can occur that are abnormal

or pathological. These problems do not occur naturally and many can be prevented, or their progress halted, by modifying ill-fitting shoes, adding supportive orthotics, or surgery. Abnormal changes to the foot include:



- Bunions (the formation of a large bump on the big toe, which starts to point toward the little toes)
- Hammering of the toes (curling of the toes)
- Clawing of the toes (more severe curling of the toes)
- Bunionettes (the formation of a large bump on the smallest toe, which starts to point toward the large toe)
- Calluses or corns, which occur on the toes or foot due to high pressure over bony areas
- Morton's neuromas ("pinched nerve" between the toes)
- Arthritis of the joints

Yearly exams with your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle podiatrist are important. Your podiatrist will track changes, check for proper sensation and circulation and call attention to abnormalities. Problems and changes can then be addressed. Early detection and treatment of problems help keep you on your feet and active.

YEARLY FOOT EXAM—20 Minutes to Stay Active

Take time to schedule an annual foot exam today. NorthPointe Foot & Ankle offers convenient appointments times. Call 248-545-0100 or online at MichiganFootCare.com.





Get Ready to Walk!

Now that Spring has sprung— treat yourself to a daily walk. A little stretching and the use of proper shoes will keep you walking comfortably!

Wearing walking shoes that are comfortable and fit your feet can help prevent injuries such as blisters and calluses. A walking shoe should also be fairly lightweight and provide good shock absorption.

Make sure to consider the shape of your feet when selecting a shoe. Your shoes should conform to the shape of your foot. Never force your foot to conform to a pair of shoes.

Width and Length

Shoes that are too narrow or too wide can lead to painful blisters and calluses. In addition, a toe box that's not high enough — and doesn't provide enough room for your toes — can aggravate foot disorders such as bunions and hammertoes.

Arch Type

The intricate alignment of bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons in your feet form side-to-side (metatarsal) and lengthwise (longitudinal) arches. As you walk, these springy, flexible arches help distribute your body weight evenly across your feet. Your arches play an important role in how you adapt to various surfaces as you walk.

Choose walking shoes that accommodate your arch type. Generally speaking, your feet fall into one of three categories:



Neutral-arched feet. Your feet aren't overly arched nor are they overly flat. Look for shoes with firm midsoles, straight to semicurved lasts — last refers to the shape of the sole and the footprint around which the shoe is built — and moderate rear-foot stability.

Low-arched or flat feet. Low arches or flat feet may contribute to muscle stress and joint problems in some individuals, though there is not a direct correlation. If you have significantly flat feet, look for a walking shoe with a straight last and motion control to help stabilize your feet.

High-arched feet. High arches may contribute to excessive strain on joints and muscles, as your feet may not absorb shock as well, especially if you perform a lot of impact or jumping activities. Look for cushioning to compensate for your lack of natural shock absorption. A curved last also may help in some cases.

Not sure about your foot type? Dip your foot in water and step on a piece of cardboard. Examine your footprint. If you can see most of your footprint, you probably have low arches. If you see very little of your footprint, you likely have high arches.

You can also look to your old shoes for clues to the shape of your foot.

NorthPointe Foot & Ankle podiatrists can help you determine the proper shoe for you, along with proper warm-up techniques. Bring your walking shoes with you to your next exam.

Prepare Your Feet for Sandals

Do you have discolored toenails? If so, this is the time to visit your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle podiatrist to find out if there is a treatment that can help you *before the summer sandal wearing season* begins.

Discolored toenails might be an indication of a serious underlying condition, such as diabetes or a liver dysfunction, but the discoloration also might be the result of a simpler issue, like ground-in dirt. Bleeding under the nail can cause blackening, but most often, a discolored nail is the result of a fungal infection.

Many common fungi are able to infect the nail and can turn it yellow, brown, reddish, green or black, depending on the variety of fungus involved. In the earliest phase, this infection might present itself as a yellowish tint or a small white spot on the nail. As the fungus grows and matures, the discoloration will usually become more pronounced.

In the advanced stages, the toenails are likely to thicken, and they might also become flaky or misshapen. From this stage, the fungal infection is likely to spread to the surrounding skin, and treatment becomes more challenging.

If you have discolored toenails find out what the cause is and your treatment options. NorthPointe Foot & Ankle offers a variety of products and other treatments to resolve nail issues.

APRIL PLANS

April 5-12 is National Volunteer Week. It is about inspiring, recognizing and encouraging people to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their communities. It is also a time to recognize all of the people that do give of their time and resources throughout the year. THANK YOU to all of you that volunteer for your church, community or special organization.

April 22 is Earth Day - enjoy the tonic of fresh air, contact with the soil, and companionship with nature! Make a positive impact on our environment this year by planting a tree, recycling and/or becoming part of a community clean-up project. Learn more at www.earthday.org.

If you would like to receive our monthly newsletter, send your email address to: Doctors@NorthPointeFoot.com