

NorthPointe Foot & Ankle
27901 Woodward Ave.
Suite 110
Berkley, MI 48072
(248) 545-0100
MichiganFootCare.com

Lee Hoffman, DPM
Charles G. Kissel, DPM
Michael Schey, DPM
David Ungar, DPM
Marc Weitzman, DPM

Special Service

Laser Surgery

NorthPointe Foot & Ankle is pleased to offer laser surgery as a treatment option for patients. Not readily available in most doctor's offices, the laser technology available to our podiatrists allows them to use this advanced procedure when other treatments have failed, or as an initial form of action. Our podiatrists are certified in laser surgery and will perform this outpatient procedure in the certified laser center adjacent to our office.

Laser surgery takes advantage of the properties of lasers to remove tissue without many of the undesirable side effects that sometimes result from using a scalpel. The laser light vaporizes the affected tissues almost instantaneously and so precisely that normal surrounding tissue is not affected.



The unique property of the laser is that as it vaporizes and destroys affected tissue, it also sterilizes and stops bleeding in the surrounding areas.

The laser beam of light is used in place of the scalpel to remove warts, ingrown nails, infected toenails, and some deep-rooted calluses, among other foot problems.

NorthPointe News

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2014



Ankle Fractures In Children

A broken ankle, also called an ankle fracture, is a common childhood injury. An ankle fracture is a break in one or more of the bones that make up the ankle: the tibia, fibula, and talus.

Ankle fractures in children are more likely to involve the tibia and fibula (the long bones in the lower leg) than the talus (a smaller bone in the foot). Fractures at the ends of the tibia and fibula typically involve the growth plates. Growth plates are areas of developing cartilage tissue that regulate bone growth and help determine the length and shape of the adult bone.



Growth plate fractures in the ankle often require immediate attention because the long-term consequences may include legs that grow crooked or of unequal length.

Twisting Force: Pediatric ankle injuries typically occur during sports or vigorous play when a child's lower leg or foot twists unexpectedly. Sports involving lateral motion and jumping — like basketball — may put children at higher risk for ankle injuries. For example, when jumping to defend, shoot, or rebound, a child may land on another child's foot, causing the foot to twist or roll to the inside or outside.

Growth Plates: The long bones of the body do not grow from the center outward. Instead, growth occurs at each end of the bone around the growth plate. When a child becomes full-grown, the growth plates harden into solid bone. Because growth plates are the last portion of bones to harden, they are vulnerable to fracture. In fact, the ligaments that attach the tibia and fibula to the talus bone are generally stronger than the growth plates. This is why an ankle twist that would result in a sprain in an adult is more likely to cause a growth plate fracture in a child.

Symptoms

Without an x-ray, it is often difficult to differentiate between an ankle sprain and a more serious ankle fracture. Initially, both sprains and fractures may cause pain and swelling. A strong sign of a fracture, however, is when a child cannot put weight on the injured ankle. Any fracture with an open skin wound is cause for significant concern, and the injured child should be taken to the nearest emergency room or urgent care facility as soon as possible.

Pediatric ankle fractures are generally classified based on several factors, including:

- The location of the fracture
- The degree of damage to the growth plate
- The position of the foot at the time of injury, such as pronation
- The direction of the force at the time of the injury, such as external rotation

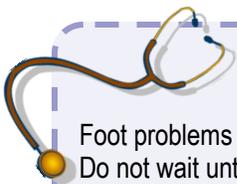
When planning treatment, your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle doctor will take these factors into account. He will also consider the degree of bone displacement. In a displaced fracture, the broken ends of bone are separated and do not line up. These types of fractures often require surgery to put the pieces back together.

Treatment

Depending on the specific diagnosis, your podiatrist may suggest:

- Closed reduction – putting the pieces of bones back in place and casting to hold in place while healing
- Open reduction – the soft tissue is removed and the bones are realigned and held in place with internal fixation (pins or screws)
- Long-leg casts or short-leg walking casts may be used

Growth plate fractures must be watched carefully by your doctor to ensure proper long-term results. This is because these fractures can lead to ankle deformity if the growth is uneven. Regular follow-up visits to your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle podiatrist should continue for at least a year after the fracture.



Foot Advice for Parents

Foot problems noticed at birth will not disappear by themselves. Do not wait until children get older to fix a problem! Foot problems in youths can lead to greater problems down the road.

Get your child checked by a NorthPointe Foot & Ankle physician. A lack of complaint by a youngster is not a reliable sign that there is not a problem. The bones of growing feet are so flexible that they can be twisted and distorted without the child being aware of it.

Walking is the best of all foot exercises. Observe your child's walking patterns. Does your child have gait abnormalities? Correct the problem before it becomes a bigger issue.

Going barefoot is a healthy activity for children under the right conditions. However, walking barefoot on dirty pavement can expose children's feet to the dangers of infection through accidental cuts and to severe contusions, sprains or fractures. Plantar warts, a virus on the sole of the foot, can also be contracted.

The Teenage Years

The time to begin a good foot care routine is actually in the teenage years. Only about half of teens believe that feet are important

to their overall health and many are living with foot pain. They should be educated on how to properly care for their feet and that a local podiatrist is here to help relieve pain and avoid long term complications.

Feet are still growing during the teen years. However, teens should be aware that foot pain of any kind is not normal. Whether they are dealing with blisters, athlete's foot, or ingrown toenails, caring for your feet at an early age reduces the risk of complications later.

According to the American Podiatric Medical Association (AMPA):

- Six out of 10 teens suffer from foot pain at least some of the time – keeping them from daily activities
- Sports are the number one cause of foot pain among teens
- Two out of 10 teens suffer from pain due to wearing high heels and other uncomfortable footwear
- Less than two out of 10 teens have ever seen a podiatrist to treat foot problems.

Children Shoe Shopping Tips

During back-to-school season and throughout the year, one of the most important purchases on any parent's shopping list should be a pair of proper fitting shoes for their child. There are several important factors that should be considered when shopping for children's shoes:

- **Children's Feet Change With Age.** Shoe and sock sizes may change every few months as a child's feet grow.
- **Shoes That Don't Fit Properly Can Aggravate the Feet.** Always measure a child's feet before buying shoes, and watch for signs of irritation.
- **Never Hand Down Footwear.** Just because a shoe size fits one child comfortably doesn't mean it will fit another the same way. Also, sharing shoes can spread fungi like athlete's foot and nail fungus.
- **Examine the Heels.** Children may wear through the heels of shoes quicker than outgrowing shoes themselves. Uneven heel wear can indicate a foot problem that should be checked by a podiatrist.
- **Take Your Child Shoe Shopping.** Every shoe fits differently. Letting a child have a say in the shoe buying process promotes healthy foot habits down the road.
- **Always Buy for the Larger Foot.** Feet are seldom precisely the same size.
- **Buy Shoes That Do Not Need a "Break-In" Period.** Shoes should be comfortable immediately. Also make sure to have your child try on shoes with socks or tights, if that's how they'll be worn.
- **Flip flops and Ballet style slip-ons are not "shoes"** These items are not supportive enough for daily wear or as a substitute for a proper "shoe."

Do Your Child's Shoes "Make The Grade?"

1. **Look For a Stiff Heel.** Press on both sides of the heel counter. It shouldn't collapse.
2. **Check Toe Flexibility.** The shoe should bend with your child's toes. It shouldn't be too stiff or bend too much in the toe box area.
3. **Select a Shoe With a Rigid Middle.** Does your shoe twist? Your shoe should never twist in the middle.



Picnic for Our Patients!

Join us for the NorthPointe Foot & Ankle annual pre-Dream Cruise Party! Enjoy National Coney Island hot dogs and classic car watching on Woodward Avenue.

Date: Thursday, August 14,
Time: 5—9 p.m.
RSVP: (248) 545-0100 by August 8
Space is limited

Reservations are limited and will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis.



Although there is no fee to participate, we ask that you bring a donation of new school supplies to help local students get back to

classes with essential tools.

We look forward to seeing you there!

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