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MEET OUR TEAM

Lauren Preston

We are pleased to welcome Lauren Preston to the NorthPointe Foot and Ankle team! Lauren comes to us from Beaumont, Grosse Pointe, where she was a nurse assistant.

In her role at NorthPointe, Lauren is a great support to our front desk team and patient records system. She helps with filing, answering the phones and other day-to-day activities.



In addition to working with us, Lauren is a student at Macomb Community College where is studying to be an Ultra-

sound Technician.

In her spare time, she enjoys playing with her dog and cat, reading and watching series on Netflix.

To receive our monthly newsletter,
send your email address to:
Doctors@NorthPointeFoot.com

NorthPointe News



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DIABETES AWARENESS

November is Diabetes Awareness Month, a time to communicate the seriousness of diabetes and the importance of diabetes prevention and control.

Diabetes is the inability to manufacture or properly use insulin, and it impairs the body's ability to convert sugars, starches, and other foods into energy. The long-term effects of elevated blood sugar can lead to serious damage to the eyes, heart, kidney, nerves, and feet.

Of the more than 28 million people in the US with diabetes, about half will develop neuropathy, a loss of feeling in the lower extremities. This nerve damage means an open sore or injury on the foot may go unnoticed until it becomes infected, which can eventually lead to the need for partial or full amputation of the foot or lower leg. In fact, diabetes is the leading cause of non-traumatic lower-limb amputation.

Due to the importance of diagnosing foot problems early in persons with diabetes, regular visits to a podiatrist are strongly recommended. Podiatrists are the most qualified doctors to care for feet, based on their education, training, and experience. As a member of a patient's health-care team, a podiatrist plays a vital role in managing diabetes successfully and avoiding foot-related complications.

While there is no cure for diabetes, there is hope. With proper diet, exercise, medical care, and careful management at home, a person with diabetes can avoid the most serious complications and enjoy a full and active life.

IF YOU HAVE DIABETES, EVEN IF IT IS WELL MANAGED, YOU ARE AT INCREASED RISK TO DEVELOP VASCULAR DISEASE. Vascular disease is the buildup of plaque and cholesterol in your arteries throughout your body.

Podiatrists are often the first physicians to spot signs of vascular disease. That's why it is so important to include your NorthPointe podiatrist on your diabetes management team.

One of the most recognized vascular diseases is Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD). PAD is caused by blockage or narrowing of the arteries in the legs. This causes a reduction of blood flow to the legs and feet and is commonly referred to as poor circulation.

Many individuals with PAD do not experience typical leg symptoms such as cramping, pain, or fatigue known as claudication. The most common signs of PAD can include:

- Fatigue, tiredness, or pain in your legs, thighs, or buttocks that happens when you walk but goes away when you rest.
- Foot or toe pain at rest that often disturbs your sleep.
- Skin wounds or ulcers on your feet or toes that are slow to heal or do not heal for 8 to 12 weeks.

Remember, leg pain is not normal. If you are experiencing any leg or thigh pain, we urge you to make an appointment with your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle doctor today.

Testing for PAD is simple, painless and takes only 15 to 20 minutes. It just may save your life.





Diabetes Checklist

YOUR DIABETES CHECKLIST:

- ⇒ Get a full foot exam by a podiatrist at least twice a year.
- ⇒ Conduct a daily foot exam.
- ⇒ Make an appointment with your podiatrist as soon as you develop any foot pain, redness, or sores.
- ⇒ Ask about the right shoes for you.

FOOT EXAM

Follow these simple steps to perform your daily foot exam:

- Check for loss of sensation in the feet, called neuropathy.
- Examine skin for calluses, blisters, sores, excessively dry or cracked skin, or any other unusual conditions, especially between the toes.
- Look for signs of decreased circulation such as thin, fragile, shiny skin with loss of hair.
- Check the feet for extreme temperatures (excessive warmth or coldness).
- Inspect nails for thickening, ingrown corners, excessive length, and fungal infection.
- Inspect socks, tights, and/or pantyhose for blood or any discharge.
- Examine footwear for torn linings, foreign objects like rocks or small pebbles, improper fit, and irritating seams.

REMEMBER: If you have trouble reaching your feet to complete your daily foot exam, prop up a mirror on the floor or ask a friend or family member for help.

Make sure you are also checking for signs of both venous and arterial ulcers, a common sign of vascular disease. Here is what to look for on your daily foot exam:

Common signs of a venous ulcer:

- Shallow or superficial appearance
- Irregular shape Small to large
- Brownish in appearance
- Skin tends to be thick
- Painful, usually related to edema, or swelling

You'll most likely find a venous ulcer on the lower leg and ankle.

Common signs of an arterial ulcer:

- Punched-out appearance
- Smooth wound edges
- Cool to the touch
- Skin is pale, shiny, taut, and thin
- Minimal to no hair growth on the limbs
- Painful, especially at night

You'll most likely find an arterial ulcer on the side of the foot, but one can occur anywhere on the lower leg or foot.



Ulcer Prevention



The best way to treat a diabetic foot ulcer is to prevent its development in the first place.

Recommended guidelines include seeing a podiatrist on a regular basis. Your podiatrist can determine if you are at high risk for developing a foot ulcer and implement strategies for prevention.

You are at high risk if you have or do the following:

- Neuropathy
- Poor circulation
- A foot deformity (e.g., bunion, hammer toe)
- Wear inappropriate shoes
- Uncontrolled blood sugar
- History of a previous foot ulceration

Reducing additional risk factors, such as smoking, drinking alcohol, high cholesterol, and elevated blood glucose, are important in prevention and treatment of a diabetic foot ulcer. Wearing the appropriate shoes and socks will also go a long way in reducing risks. Your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle podiatrist can provide guidance in selecting the proper shoes.

If an ulcer is noticed, seek podiatric medical care immediately. Foot ulcers in patients with diabetes should be treated quickly to reduce the risk of infection and amputation, and improve function and quality of life.



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