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## Product Feature

### GameDay Ankle Brace

Experiencing ankle pain or sprain? Talk to your NorthPointe doctor today about using a GameDay Brace.

This unique, ultra-thin brace fits under a tennis shoe and allows the ankle to recover more quickly. Athletes are permitted to play with the GameDay Brace because it protects the ankle even with exercise.

The elastic cuff contains laces and provides support, stability, compression and pain relief.



Order your FREE copy of *Diabetes and Foot Care* at:  
[MichiganFootCare.com](http://MichiganFootCare.com)

It was written by the doctors of NorthPointe Foot & Ankle.

# NorthPointe News

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## Foot and Ankle Sprains and Fractures

The snow and ice is here and the winter weather can often bring about some serious foot and ankle injuries. The most common foot injuries are sprains and fractures.

### Fractures

A fracture is a break in the bone. Fractures can be divided into two categories: traumatic fractures and stress fractures.

*Traumatic fractures* are caused by a direct blow or impact, such as seriously stubbing your toe.

Signs and symptoms of a traumatic fracture include:

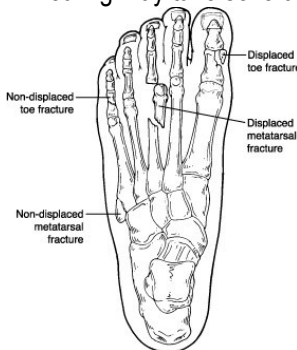
- You may hear a sound at the time of the break.
- "Pinpoint pain" (pain at the place of impact) at the time the fracture occurs and perhaps for a few hours later, but often the pain goes away after several hours.
- Crooked or abnormal appearance of the toe.
- Bruising and swelling the next day.

It is not true that "if you can walk on it, it's not broken." Evaluation by a foot and ankle surgeon is always recommended.

Treatment of toe fractures depends on the type and extent of the fracture, and may include:

Rest • Avoid the offending activity • Immobilization, casting, or rigid shoe • Surgery

*Stress fractures* occur as small hairline cracks in a bone from overloading over time. They are sometimes difficult to demonstrate on x-rays until they begin to heal. Reducing the load with appropriate shoes or a cast is the usual treatment. Complete healing may take several months.



### Sprains

Any joint in the foot may be injured or sprained.

An ankle sprain is an injury to one or more ligaments in the ankle, usually on the outside of the ankle.

Ligaments are bands of fibrous tissue that connect one bone to another and bind the joints together. In the ankle joint, ligaments provide stability by limiting side-to-side movement.

The severity of an ankle sprain depends on whether the ligament is stretched, partially torn, or completely torn, as well as on the number of ligaments involved. Ankle sprains are not the same as strains, which affect muscles rather than ligaments.

Sprained ankles often result from a fall, a sudden twist, or a blow that forces the ankle joint out of its normal position. Ankle sprains commonly occur while participating in sports, wearing inappropriate shoes, or walking or running on an uneven surface.

The symptoms of ankle sprains may include:

- Pain or soreness • Swelling • Bruising
- Difficulty walking • Stiffness in the joint

These symptoms may vary in intensity, depending on the severity of the sprain. Sometimes pain and swelling are absent in people with previous ankle sprains. Instead, they may simply feel the ankle is wobbly and unsteady when they walk. Even if there is no pain or swelling with a sprained ankle, treatment is crucial. Any ankle sprain – whether it's your first or your fifth – requires prompt medical attention.. Chronic joint instability may ensue from inadequately treated sprains.

Treatment for most sprains will include the following: Rest • Ice • Compression • Elevation • Early physical therapy • Medications.

In more severe cases, surgery may be required to adequately treat an ankle sprain. Surgery often involves repairing the damaged ligament or ligaments. The foot and ankle surgeon will select the surgical procedure best suited for your case based on the type and severity of your injury as well as your activity level.

If you experience any foot or ankle pain, consult your foot specialist at NorthPointe immediately.



# Be Good To Your Heart...Get a PAD Test

Adults with diabetes are at high risk for having a common and dangerous vascular condition called **Peripheral Arterial Disease**.

**PAD** occurs when arteries in the legs become narrowed or clogged with fatty deposits, reducing blood flow to the legs. This can result in leg muscle pain when walking, disability, amputation, and poor quality of life. Blocked arteries found in people with **PAD** can be a red flag that other arteries, including those in the heart and brain, may also be blocked — increasing the risk of a heart attack or stroke.

People with **PAD** may have one or more of the following symptoms:

- “Claudication” – fatigue, heaviness, tiredness or cramping in the leg muscles (calf, thigh or buttocks) that occurs during activity such as walking and goes away with rest.
- Foot or toe pain at rest that often disturbs sleep
- Skin wounds or ulcers on the feet or toes that are slow to heal (or that do not heal for 8 to 12 weeks).



Unfortunately, **PAD** is often a silent disease, causing no recognizable symptoms. National medical guidelines recommend that adults over 50 years of age with diabetes be tested for **PAD**. Testing should also be considered in patients under 50 years of age with diabetes and at least one other cardiovascular risk factors such as a history of smoking, abnormal cholesterol and/or high blood pressure. The test for **PAD** is called the ankle-brachial index, a painless, non-invasive test that compares the blood pressure in the ankles with the blood pressure in the arms.

Testing for **PAD** is simple, painless and fast. Testing is available at the NorthPointe Foot & Ankle office and takes only 15 – 20 minutes. If you are concerned that you may be showing the signs of PAD call for an appointment today and get yourself tested.

**PAD** is treatable and treatment is most effective when the disease is diagnosed early. Treatment for **PAD** focuses on reducing symptoms and preventing further progression of the disease. In most cases, lifestyle changes, exercise and medications are enough to slow the progression or even reverse the symptoms of PAD.

## The Body's Healing Process

From the moment a bone breaks or a ligament tears, your body goes to work to repair the damage. Here's what happens at each stage of the healing process:

*At the moment of injury:* Chemicals are released from damaged cells, triggering a process called inflammation. Blood vessels at the injury site become dilated; blood flow increases to carry nutrients to the site of tissue damage.

*Within hours of injury:* White blood cells (leukocytes) travel down the bloodstream to the injury site where they begin to tear down and remove damaged tissue, allowing other specialized cells to start developing scar tissue.

*Within days of injury:* Scar tissue is formed on the skin or inside the body. The amount of scarring may be proportional to the amount of swelling, inflammation, or bleeding within. In the next few weeks, the damaged area will regain a great deal of strength as scar tissue continues to form.

*Within a month of injury:* Scar tissue may start to shrink, bringing damaged, torn, or separated tissues back together. However, it may be several months or more before the injury is completely healed.

## PAD Screening

The significance of PAD screening is identified above. If you fall under any of the following categories, talk to your NorthPointe doctor today about receiving a screening.

- Over 50 years of age
- Suffer from Diabetes
- Experience tiredness in your legs

PAD screening is fast and painless and will be conducted in NorthPointe's office. Call our office (248-545-0100) to schedule your screening.

PAD screening is important, please share this information with your friends, family and colleagues.