

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

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NorthPointe News



Foot & Ankle Special



Lee Hoffman, DPM
Brian Kissel, DPM
Charles Kissel, DPM
Aimee Popofski, DPM
David Ungar, DPM
Marc Weitzman, DPM

Our Convenient Hours for Appointments

NorthPointe Foot & Ankle doctors understand that it is difficult to take time off of work during the weekdays for appointments. That is why our office offers some weekday evening hours, as well as select Saturday appointments.

There is no reason to put off a needed foot exam or suffer with foot or ankle pain.



Office hours are:

Monday	9am-7pm
Tuesday	9am-6pm
Wednesday	8am-5pm
Thursday	9am-7pm
Friday	8am-5pm
Select Saturdays	8:30am-12pm

As always, the NorthPointe team of doctors is available 24-hours a day for emergencies and hospital visits.

Convenient appointments may be made by calling 248-545-0100 or send a request online at www.michiganfootcare.com.

AGING FEET: TAKE SPECIAL CARE

On average, a person will walk 75,000 miles by the age of 50 and take up to 10,000 steps on any given day. This creates up to hundreds of tons of foot pressure every day. The doctors of NorthPointe Foot & Ankle share that, as we age, proper foot care is essential to maintain good health and to continue our walking independence.

In addition to years of wear and tear on our feet, disease, poor circulation, improperly trimmed toenails, and wearing shoes that don't fit properly are hard on

our feet. Problems with our feet can be the first sign of more serious medical conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, and nerve and circulatory disorders. Foot pain of any kind is not normal and should be checked by a podiatrist for proper diagnosis and care.

There are several ways to reduce the risk of foot problems:

- **Check feet regularly**, or have a family member check them for skin cracks or peeling, color and temperature anomalies, or thick and discolored nails.
- **Practice good foot care.** Applying moisturizing creams and scrubbing feet with pumice helps keep the skin supple and prevent cracks. Certain exercises can strengthen feet and improve flexibility. Washing and thoroughly drying feet often is also recommended.
- **Avoid walking barefoot.**
- **Keep blood circulating** as much as possible. Do this by elevating feet when sitting or lying down, stretching after sitting for long periods of time, or walking.
- **Wear proper fitting shoes.** Avoid pressure from shoes that don't fit right. Wearing comfortable shoes that fit well can prevent many foot ailments. The size of our feet change as we age so always measure feet before buying shoes.

- **Minimize exposing feet to cold temperatures.**
- **Don't smoke.** Smokers are more likely to develop poor circulation, blisters and have complications with fractures.

As we age, common foot problems include:

- **Fungal and bacterial conditions**, including athlete's foot, occur because our feet spend a lot of time in shoes - a warm, dark, humid place that is perfect for fungus to grow.
- **Dry skin** can cause itching and burning feet. Use mild soap in small amounts and a moisturizing cream or lotion on feet every day.
- **Corns and calluses** are caused by friction and pressure when the bony parts of our feet rub against our shoes. Treating corns and calluses without the guidance of a medical expert may be harmful.
- **Warts** are skin growths caused by viruses. They are sometimes painful and, if untreated, may spread.
- **Bunions** develop when the joints in a big toe no longer fit together as they should and become swollen and tender.
- **Ingrown toenails** occur when a piece of the nail breaks the skin - which can happen if nails are not cut properly
- **Hammertoe** is caused by a shortening of the tendons that control toe movements. The toe knuckle is usually enlarged, drawing the toe back
- **Pain in the arch** and heel are caused by muscle strain in the feet. Standing for long periods of time, wearing slippers or going barefoot too much, or being overweight can make this pain worse.

The Michigan Podiatric Medical Association recommends that adults over the age of 65 visit their podiatrist for an annual consultation.



To receive our monthly newsletter, send your email address to: NorthPointe@FootandAnkleSEMI.com

Acute Inflammation

Inflammation is the body's normal protective response to an injury, irritation, or surgery. This natural "defense" process brings increased blood flow to the area, resulting in an accumulation of fluid. As the body mounts this protective response, the symptoms of inflammation develop.



These include:

- Swelling
- Pain
- Increased warmth and redness of the skin

Inflammation can be acute or chronic. When it is acute, it occurs as an immediate response to trauma (an injury or surgery), usually within two hours. When it is chronic, the inflammation reflects an ongoing response to a longer-term

medical condition, such as arthritis.

To reduce inflammation and the resulting swelling and pain, injured tissue needs to be properly treated. The earlier you start treatment, the better.

Initial treatment for acute inflammation in the foot or ankle consists of RICE therapy:

- **Rest:** Stay off the foot or ankle. Walking may cause further injury.
- **Ice:** Apply an ice pack to the injured area, placing a thin towel between the ice and the skin. Use ice for 20 minutes and then wait at least 40 minutes before icing again.
- **Compression:** An elastic wrap should be used to control swelling.
- **Elevation:** The foot or ankle should be raised slightly above the level of your heart to reduce swelling.

In addition to the above measures, your foot and ankle surgeon may prescribe a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), such as ibuprofen, or another type of medication.

The symptoms of inflammation typically improve within two or three days. If your pain and discomfort do not improve after three days, call your NorthPointe doctor or go to an emergency room to determine whether a more serious problem exists.

Although inflammation can be caused by an infection, they are not the same and are treated differently. Your NorthPointe doctor can best determine the cause of your inflamed tissue.

Fall Foot Care

Feet can benefit from special attention as you move from lighter summer foot wear to heavier cool weather shoes. Following are some tips about autumn foot care:

Moisturize: Dry feet can lead to cracking, pain, and infections. Moisturize feet with an oil-based moisturizing lotion in the evenings before bed, or in the morning after a shower.

Breathing room: Give feet adequate time outside of heavy, enclosed shoes to avoid unwanted odors. Natural materials, including leather and suede, allow more air circulation.

Check Toes: Moisture that collects between the toes can easily lead to problems. Make sure to change shoes quickly if your feet get wet or sweaty, and don't wear your socks for more than one day in a row.

Nails: Give your toenails a break from nail polish. Regularly polishing the nails may cause nails to yellow, peel or dry up.

Leaf Raking Tips

A necessary part of fall clean-up is always leaf raking. When tackling this task, there is a risk of injury due to the amount of bending, twisting, pulling and reaching motions required. This activity may result in achy, pulled or even torn muscles.

The doctors of NorthPointe Foot & Ankle would like to share some advice for as you prepare to rake your lawn.

- **Warm-up your muscles** for at least 10 minutes with stretching before you pick up a rake, especially if you have not exercised your shoulder, arm and neck muscles for some time.
- **Keep a straight back** and turn your whole body while you rake to avoid twisting your back. Use your legs to shift your weight instead of your back, and avoid throwing a bag of leaves over the shoulder or to the side as this twisting motion also can strain the back.
- **Use short strokes** instead of long ones to cut down the risk of over extension injuries.
- **Vary your movements** so you can avoid excessive stress on one muscle group.
- **Bend at the knees** and squat rather than at the waist to pick up your heavy piles of leaves and when lifting garbage bags or bins.
- **Make sure your rake is the proper height and weight** for you. If it's too short, you could strain your back, and if it's too heavy it will put added strain on your neck and shoulders.
- **Wear gloves** or use rakes with padded handles to prevent blisters.
- **Keep your vision free of impediment** and wear shoes with slip-resistant soles.
- **Start slowly and pace yourself.** You don't want to overexert yourself, especially if you have a lot more leaves to rake!