

### Our Offices

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## Ouch! My Heel Hurts! Frequently Asked Questions About Heel Pain

Just about everyone experiences heel pain at least once. Heel pain may not signal a serious condition, but it certainly interferes with your normal activities like exercising and even walking.



Here are some frequent questions that we are often asked in our practice about this very common ailment:

**What causes heel pain?** One of the most frequent causes of heel pain is plantar fasciitis, or inflammation of the thick band of tissue that runs on the bottom of your foot from the heel to the toe bones. Plantar fasciitis affects up to 10% of the population! Other common causes of heel pain include a biomechanical problem like arch height, repeated heel stress or impact, or Achilles tendonitis. Arthritis or bursitis can contribute to heel pain too.

**Why does my heel hurt the most when I first get out of bed in the morning?** The plantar fascia ligament on the bottom of your foot contracts while you are resting. Standing causes sudden and painful stretching and pulling of the ligament.

**Who is most at risk of heel pain?** Women have plantar fasciitis more often than men, perhaps because of poor shoe choices like high heels. Those who are overweight or who stand for several hours each day, individuals with either flat feet or a very high arch, as well as those who wear worn out shoes with thin soles are at increased risk of heel pain.

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## History FootNote

President Abraham Lincoln depended on his foot doctor for relief from chronic foot pain as well as backache.

## Celebrity Foot Focus

The Academy Awards audience roared when Tiffany Haddish and Maya Rudolph refused to wear their uncomfortable shoes and instead presented their awards while barefoot.

**What kind of treatment is available for heel pain?** If you suffer from heel pain, please come visit us for an accurate diagnosis and the right treatment for your problem. Our treatments include nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) – with your doctor’s permission - to reduce inflammation; a steroid injection to relieve both pain and inflammation; rest and icing the painful area; physical therapy for stretching and strengthening exercises and massage. If your pain persists, we may recommend more intense treatments and even surgery.

**Can heel pain be prevented?** A few lifestyle changes can help plantar fasciitis from recurring. If you are overweight, lose weight to reduce the pressure on your feet. Avoid wearing high heels – instead, choose sturdy shoes with good support. Stick to low-impact workouts like swimming and biking instead of running. Stretch your calves and the bottom of your feet frequently. Even sleeping with your bedsheet untucked will allow your feet to stretch out at night!

You don’t have to suffer with heel pain – we have the solution! Please call for an appointment during our convenient office hours – we can help!

## Tips for Helping Seniors Regain Their Balance

If you or a loved family member is a senior citizen, you know that as we age we may experience balance problems. Medical conditions like vision or inner ear issues, arthritis and circulation or heart problems can cause unsteadiness on your feet. Being out of balance can result in a dangerous fall and a sprain or fracture.



Other problems such as neuropathy – nerve disease – may cause foot numbness that can make you unsure of your walking or standing surfaces. Multiple sclerosis (MS) or Parkinson’s and other diseases of the nervous system can cause nerve deterioration over time.

No matter what your age, there are some simple steps you can take to improve your balance:

### Exercise to Improve Your Balance and Strength

- Tai chi improves balance while it relieves stress.
- Stand on one foot for 10 seconds while holding onto a chair. Repeat 5 times and then use your other foot.

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## Foot Funnies



It's easy to learn podiatry – the manuals all have footnotes.

## Trivia

**Our feet are bigger at night. True or false?**

Answer: **True**

After spending the whole day walking, running, or jumping around, our feet have swollen by as much as half a shoe size by the end of the day. This is why it is recommended that you buy shoes late in the day, when your feet are at their largest.

## ...continued from page 2 **Tips for Helping Seniors...**

- Try walking in a straight line looking ahead of you, not down at your feet. Place your heel directly in front of your toes.
- Stretch your arms out to the side while looking at a spot ahead of you. Walk toward the spot, lifting your back leg and pausing briefly with each step. Repeat 10 times, then alternate legs.

### **Choose Your Footwear Wisely**

Always wear sturdy shoes that fit well. Do your shoes pass the 1-2-3 test?

1. Are the sides of the heel firm when pressed?
2. Is the toe area flexible but not too flimsy?
3. Can you twist the shoe while holding the heel and toe – but not too much?

If your shoes fail this test, it's time to update your shoe wardrobe! Invest in your balance and safety by choosing good quality, sturdy shoes. We can help assess both your foot health and walking style so you can choose the right shoes.

### **Recipe of the Month**

## **Beet and Goat Cheese Arugula Salad**

This gourmet salad has colors, flavors, and textures that will complement most any meal and will become a staple for any family gathering or special occasion.

### **Ingredients**

- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons shallots, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 6 medium beets, cooked and quartered
- 6 cups fresh arugula
- 1/2 cup walnuts, toasted, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries or dried cherries
- 1/2 avocado, peeled, pitted, and cubed
- 3 ounces soft fresh goat cheese, coarsely crumbled



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....continued from page 3 **Recipe of the Month**

## Directions

Line a baking sheet with foil. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.

Whisk the vinegar, shallots, and honey in a medium bowl to blend. Gradually whisk in the oil. Season the vinaigrette, to taste, with salt and pepper. Toss the beets in a small bowl with enough dressing to coat. Place the beets on the prepared baking sheet and roast until the beets are slightly caramelized, stirring occasionally, about 12 minutes. Set aside and cool.

Toss the arugula, walnuts, and cranberries in a large bowl with enough vinaigrette to coat. Season the salad, to taste, with salt and pepper. Mound the salad atop 4 plates. Arrange the beets around the salad. Sprinkle with the avocado and goat cheese, and serve.

*Recipe courtesy of Giada De Laurentiis*

## PodiatryCare, P.C. and the Heel Pain Center

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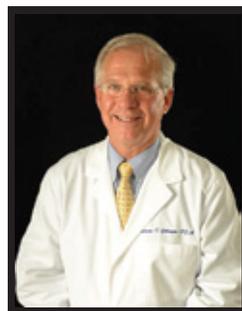


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## Meet our Doctors



Dr. Marra



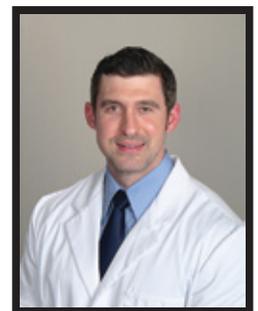
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