



If your hurting feet could talk...



The Ins & Outs of Indoor & Outdoor Walking

Walking is a popular form of exercise for young and old alike, and for good reason! It's easy, you don't need expensive equipment, and you can pretty much do it anytime, anywhere—inside or out! Depending on the weather, which is particularly "iffy" this time of year, you can enjoy a hike in the great outdoors, or you can head inside for a sheltered stroll. Whichever you choose, though, be sure to check out these tips to keep your walk safe, and keep your routine going.

About the Doctor



Jennifer Keller, DPM

Tagging along with your mom to a doctor appointment could redirect your career path.

That's exactly what happened to Dr. Jennifer Keller while an undergraduate in biochemistry at Virginia Tech. Her mom's podiatrist served as a mentor helping guide the decision to become a podiatrist. After obtaining her Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree at NYCPM, Dr. Keller completed a foot and ankle surgical residency at Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore, MD. Away from the office, Dr. Keller enjoys time with her children, horses, dogs and cats. While born a Yankee in NY, she has adapted well to life in Botetourt County.

Get Social w/Us



Plan a place. When the weather is bad, the mall isn't the only place you can get your steps in, there are schools and businesses who open their doors to walkers too. Colleges and clubs often have open hours for their indoor tracks to promote year-round health. You can also use a treadmill, if you prefer to stay inside. If heading outside, make sure you choose a course with even terrain to avoid sprained ankles and falling. Parks often have maps for their trails that rate difficulty.

Seize opportunities. One of the great things about walking is it's easy to fit into any schedule. Take advantage of moments throughout your day when you can squeeze in some extra steps: take the stairs, walk to a co-worker instead of sending an email, opt for a farther away parking spot, go up and down every aisle at the grocery store—you get the idea.

Dress for success. Obviously, what you wear inside is going to be different than what you wear out. Your best bet is to dress in layers. That way you can take layers on and off as needed. Proper footwear is also essential to avoid discomfort and possible injuries. Look for shoes made specifically for walking, with plenty of cushion and supportive soles.

Find some friends. It's easier to stick to an exercise program if you're not trying to go it alone! Join a walking group or ask family or friends to accompany you.

Don't overdo it. Just like with any form of exercise, you should start out slowly, then gradually increase distance and intensity. It's a good idea to warm up beforehand, too. Do a few stretches or a set of jumping jacks before you hit the road.

For more tips, walk on over and ask our friendly staff!



There's a Fungus Among Us

Fight Off Those Fungal Toenails!

Ah, Spring—the birds are singing, the grass is growing, the flowers are blooming, and the fungus is definitely among us! This time of year can bring damp, wet weather, locker rooms get crowded with spring athletes, and the risk of a fungal toenail infection is as high as the pollen count. You need to take precautions. Make sure you change your socks and shoes to keep feet dry. Wear shower shoes in public places like locker rooms, pools, and saunas. Apply anti-fungal powder or spray to both your feet and footwear. If the fungi have already found you, not to worry. This time of year isn't just prime for contracting a fungal infection, it's also the perfect time to treat it! That way you can get your nails healthy before you break out those summer sandals.

You can try topical antifungal gels, creams, and polishes, but for stubborn cases, you may need to see us for a stronger, oral medication. If the infection is severe, the nail may have to be surgically removed. However, laser therapy is a great alternative. A concentrated light beam penetrates the nail and zaps the fungi without damaging any surrounding tissue. Multiple applications may be necessary, but the end result is clear, healthy nails just in time for summer. For more information, just ask our helpful staff, so you can bid a fond farewell to toenail fungus fast!

Mark Your Calendars

- March 1** National Pig Day—oink, oink
- March 4** National Walk to Work Day—we knew those tips would come in handy!
- March 12** Plant a Flower Day—grab those garden gloves!
- March 14** National Potato Chip Day—a perfect excuse
- March 17** St. Patrick's Day—go green!
- March 23** National Chip and Dip Day—still have some chips left?



Help! There's an Invisible Pebble in My Shoe

Everyone knows how annoying it is to get a pebble in your shoe. You have to take the shoe off, shake it upside down, then put it back on so that it will feel—the same? What gives? If you feel like your sock is wadded up when it's not, or you're walking on a pebble but there's not one there, don't worry—you haven't lost your mind! You are likely experiencing a condition called Morton's neuroma—a thickening or inflammation around one of the nerves in the ball of your foot. This most often occurs between your third and fourth toes as a result of your toes being squished together—beware high heel wearers of the world!

Besides the odd sensation that something is in your shoe, the condition can also cause a burning sensation, tingling, numbness, and pain. A switch in footwear with plenty of wiggle room for your toes can help, along with rest, ice, and anti-inflammatory medication. Orthotic shoe inserts may be beneficial as well. Another remedy? Massage. Sounds like a little pampering is in order!

If none of these tactics seem to help, there are injections and surgical procedures that can be considered. If you can't shake the problem, stop trying to shake out your shoes and come see us—we'll determine the treatment that's best for you.



St. Patty's Day Fun Facts

The very first St. Patrick's Day parade was in Boston, not in Ireland, in 1737.

In Chicago, the rivers are dyed green on St. Patrick's Day.

The shamrock was considered sacred in the olden days of Ireland.

McDonald's first served their popular Shamrock Shake in 1970.

In traditional Irish folk tales, there are no female leprechauns.

The original color associated with St. Patrick was blue, not green!



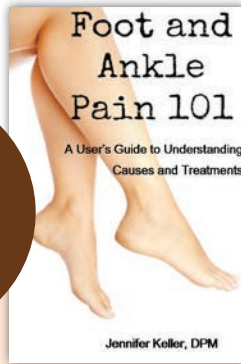


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Calming Concerns about Intoeing

Pigeons coo just like babies do, but as a parent, you hope the similarities stop there! Sometimes, however, children's feet do turn inward instead of pointing straight ahead, a condition known as intoeing, a.k.a. "pigeon toes." If this is the case with your child, rest assured it is as common as all that cooing going on! (Not to mention those diaper changes!)

Thought to be a result of the child's position in the womb or a twisting of the shin or femur bones, in the majority of cases, intoeing almost always corrects itself with age. In other words, your child will most likely be walking just fine before he or she flies the coop.

Of course, if the situation doesn't seem to be going away or if it is causing your child difficulties walking and running and doing all of the things kids love to do, there are treatment options available, including casting and special braces that hold the foot in the proper position. Night splints and stretches can prove to be helpful as well.

Your best bet, though, is to have us assess your child's gait and determine what type of treatment, if any, is appropriate. The bottom line? If your child is pigeon-toed, there's no need to panic. Running out of diapers, on the other hand, is a different story.