

IN THE KNOW



With Dr. Rhodes

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- High Heels & Your Feet
- Foot Pain and Weight
- Kids' Feet Hurt Too

Recover the Beauty of Your Feet & Legs

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High Heels and Your Feet

Women invite foot problems with high heels. Over time the foot responds to this abuse with a litany of problems including bunions, hammer-toes, painful, trapped nerves, a shortened Achilles tendon (the tendon connecting the calf muscle to the heel bone), and hard, thickened skin on the ball of the foot. In addition, high

heels shift the body symmetry, resulting in knee and back problems as well.

There are ways to relieve some of the abusive effects of high heels. The American Orthopedic Foot and Ankle Society discourages wearing high heels greater than 2-1/4 inches and recommends limiting their use to two or three hours per day.

But if you've ever wondered, enviously, how celebrity and fashion-tribe women manage to strut red carpets for hours in sky-high stilettos, here's one possible secret: collagen injections in the balls or heels of their feet. Plumping up your feet with injections is cheaper and less risky than foot surgery.

Remember there is no substitute for using good foot sense when it comes to high heels and even if those 3 inch heels don't hurt try the **Slipper Test**. Put on a pair of slippers or flat shoes and if they are uncomfortable especially at the back of the heel then you have shortened your Achilles tendon from all those years of wearing high heels. Don't feel too bad if you didn't pass the slipper test neither did top Diva Mariah Carey who admitted to Britain's Daily Mail newspaper "I can't wear flat shoes. My feet repel them". There are ways to recover some of the lost length and decrease the discomfort on the ball of the foot medically without surgery.

Is Pain Keeping You From Losing Weight?

With spring in the air, many of us are heading outdoors to get some exercise. And walking is one of the best, as well as one of the most economical, methods of exercise. In fact, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control tells us that people of all ages benefit from participating in regular, moderate-intensity physical activity, such as 30 minutes of brisk walking five or more times a week.



The latest data from the National Center for Health Statistics show that 30 percent of U.S. adults 20 years of age and older—over 60 million people—are obese. And when we think about losing those extra pounds, a program of exercise walking usually pops into our minds, right?

Of course, exercise walking is difficult, if not impossible, when our feet hurt. And very often, being overweight has contributed to foot problems such as heel pain (plantar fasciitis) and flat feet. So what's an overweight person to do?

If your feet are keeping you from exercising, make an appointment with our office for an evaluation. Very often there are some simple approaches we can recommend that will ease the pain and make it possible for you to get started on your fitness walking program in very short order. In other cases that have surgical conditions we may recommend a surgical procedure to ease the pain of deformities such as bunions or hammertoes, and we'll be able to suggest alternative types of exercise you can do until your feet are ready to take you out on the walking paths again.

Don't let painful feet keep you from losing weight! Eliminating that pain is the first step in regaining physical fitness and having a more active and fulfilling lifestyle.

Kids' Feet Can Keep Them on the Sidelines, Too



Spring is here, and parks and playgrounds all across the U.S. are filling up with after-school youth sports teams. From baseball to soccer and track, some kids are out on the field every day of the week playing one sport or another, and sometimes they even play two different sports in one day!

While physical activity is great for kids, overdoing it can cause lasting problems for their feet and ankles. Bones, ligaments and tendons in kids' feet and ankles aren't fully developed yet, and damage can occur when they are stressed from hours of playing. Common injuries to children's' feet and ankles include:

Inflammation of the heel's growth plate, due to muscle strain and repetitive stress. In children, the heel bone is not yet fully developed until age 14 or older. Until then, new bone is forming at the growth plate, a weak area located at the back of the heel.

Achilles tendonitis, occurs mainly in adolescents when the Achilles tendon becomes stressed and inflamed from repeated running and pounding.

Stress fractures, which are hairline breaks resulting from repeated stress on the bone, often occur in adolescents engaged in athletics, especially when the intensity of training suddenly changes.

Tendo-Achilles bursitis, is an inflammation of the fluid-filled sac located between the Achilles tendon and the heel bone. It can result from injuries to the heel, repetitive stress, or wearing poorly-cushioned shoes.

Remember, pain is **NEVER** normal in a child's foot or ankle! Some kids will insist on continuing to play even when they're in pain. Parents and coaches should never allow this to happen! Continuing to play with an injury can result in problems that may plague the child into adulthood. Any pain that lasts more than a few days, or that is severe enough to limit the child's ability to walk, should be evaluated in our office as soon as possible.