



FEET FIRST!

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Please enjoy this monthly newsletter, written especially for our patients and those whom you care about. If this month's topic can benefit a friend or family member, please feel free to pass it on so that others can experience the same superior service that you have come to know!



Dr. Rick Tomassi

Fellow American College of Foot and Ankle Orthopedics and Medicine

Fellow American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery

Fellow American Professional Wound Care Association



Dr. Dan Olson

Associate American College of Foot and Ankle Surgery

Associate American Professional Wound Care Association

Pediatric Fixes for Flat Feet

Years ago when a child had flat feet, there really wasn't a whole lot that could be done to change them as the feet continued to develop.

Well, times have changed and now there are a number of steps that we follow to prevent problems down the road that can result from having flat feet.

First off, let's make it clear that children are born with flat feet; arches don't begin to form until about the age of three or four. So, flat feet up until that age really pose no serious problems, unless the child's shoes are wearing out quickly. In this case, we might recommend arch orthotics, although they do nothing to influence the shape or development of the feet.

If the flat feet don't cause any problems as the child ages, no treatment is generally required.

However, if the child begins to experience chronic pain in the feet, ankles or lower legs, or starts tripping and

falling often, or he or she has trouble keeping up with peers in competitive sports, then we recommend some type of surgical intervention to correct the flat feet.

The most common procedure to correct flat feet in children is a 20-minute procedure during which we insert a titanium implant into the *subtalar* joint of the foot. This implant holds the joint in place so that, as the foot grows, muscles, tendons and bones grow into their proper position in the foot.

Placing the implant in this position creates the proper arch that leads to the correct development of the feet. As the child grows, his or her body (ankles, legs, hips, lower back and neck) is far more likely to be properly aligned because the foundation of the body, the feet, are firmly grounded!

There is some debate over the age at which this surgery ought to be performed. Some podiatric surgeons feel that when it is performed at a younger age, the child's arches

are corrected even before the feet begin to have any problems. Others believe it is better to wait until the child is a bit older to see whether or not the flat feet cause any pain.



Flat feet in children can grow into even bigger problems if left untreated!

Of course, we have our own opinion which we will be happy to discuss with you – so just feel free to ask us!

At our office, we welcome the opportunity to speak with you about the various options available for the treatment of flat feet in children or any other foot condition that may be affecting you or a member of your family.

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*Quote of the
Month...*

**"The foolish
man seeks
happiness in the
distance; the
wise grows it
under his feet."**

James Oppenheim

About Our Practice

Podiatric Medicine and Surgery is a medical specialty that deals with conditions of the foot and ankle.

Podiatric physicians, who are sometimes called foot doctors or foot and ankle surgeons, treat many conditions of the foot and ankle, including sprains, fractures and other trauma, calluses, plantar warts, bunions, ingrown toe nails, and diabetic foot problems.

The foot and ankle are the foundation of your entire body. Since your entire upper body rests on your feet, it is essential to maintain a proper base of support.

Therefore, it is imperative that you take the necessary steps to insure that the foot and ankle are always in their optimal corrected alignment. Keeping a

"leg up" on any problems or symptoms you may notice helps to insure that you have a more comfortable lifestyle.

Dr. Tomassi is Board Certified by the American Board of Podiatric Orthopaedics & Primary Podiatric Medicine.

He received his podiatric education at the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine and has been in private practice since completing his post-graduate residency in Youngstown, OH.

Dr. Tomassi has held many positions on professional boards and received numerous distinguished awards.

In addition, Dr. Tomassi is extremely involved in charity activities. He provides Christmas dinners each year to needy area families (since 1988) and provides lower extremity screenings

each year to Special Olympics athletes.

Dr. Dan Olson attended Gannon University (Erie, PA) where he received a bachelor's of science degree. He also received his podiatric education at the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine in Cleveland.

Dr. Olson is an Associate Member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons and is board qualified by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery.

He is also a member of the American Podiatric Medical Association and the Pennsylvania Podiatric Medical Association in which he serves as secretary of the Erie/Northwest Division.

At **Baycity Associates in Podiatry**, we are confident that we can help you with any foot or ankle challenge you might have and we look forward to serving you!