



# NEXT STEP

*Put Your Best Foot Forward*

From Connecticut Foot Care Centers, LLC



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## Stop the Pain of Bunions

Many believe that bunions are the problem of the elderly or of women who wear very tight shoes. But every day we see both men and women of all ages in our waiting room looking for relief from the pain of bunions.



### Causes and Symptoms

A bunion results from years of abnormal pressure on the big toe joint caused by your gait, shoe choice, arthritis, injury or even your genetic foot type. When the bone or tissue of the big toe moves out of place and extends beyond the normal curvature of the toe, a bump or bunion forms on the joint. The big toe will push against the next toe and crowd the others.

Sometimes a callus or corn will form on the bunion, and the skin over this bump may be red and sore. You may experience pain that is intermittent or persistent, and movement of the big toe may be restricted.

### Diagnosis and Treatment

We will carefully examine your foot and toes and determine if range of motion is impacted. An x-ray will show the severity of the bunion and help identify its cause.

Our first treatment choices are **conservative**, in other words those that are non-invasive.

**Change shoes.** Choose comfortable shoes with plenty of space in the toe box and at the ball of the foot. Avoid high heels which place excessive pressure on toe joints. ***Stop the Pain of Bunions.....Continued on pg 2***

## *Stop the Pain of Bunions.....Continued from pg 1*

**Taping and padding.** We will use padding and tape to reduce pain and stress on the bunion.

**Medications.** Anti-inflammatory medications like ibuprofen and naproxen can help reduce inflammation, and along with acetaminophen can help alleviate pain.

**Injections.** Cortisone injections can also lessen swelling and pain.

**Shoe inserts.** Padded inserts reduce symptoms by redistributing pressure evenly and can prevent your bunion from getting worse.

**Icing.** Applying ice can relieve soreness and inflammation.

### **When to Consider Surgery**

If conservative treatments fail to resolve your pain, and your ability to walk or enjoy normal activities is limited, it's time to discuss a surgical solution for your bunion.

The goal of bunion surgery is to return your toe to the correct position to relieve discomfort. Each situation is unique and there are many surgical techniques. We will discuss the options with you based on your specific needs.

The surgery is usually done on an outpatient basis. Full recovery can take weeks. It's important to wear proper, roomy shoes after your recovery to prevent a recurrence.

### **Visit our Office for a Consultation**

If you suffer from a bunion, make an appointment to see us. Our treatment recommendations will begin with the most conservative approach. Remember – a bunion will not get better on its own, and delaying treatment may cause it to get worse.

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## **Protect Your Feet while Enjoying Winter Sports**

Winter is here and skiers, snowboarders, skaters and sledders are donning winter *Protect Your Feet while Enjoying Winter Sports.....Continued on pg 3*

## **History Footnote**

While modern-day presidents have a Physician to the President to monitor their overall health, leaders like Napoleon and Abraham Lincoln had their own personal podiatrists.

## **Celebrity Foot Focus**

It's tough at the top, and that goes for foot problems too. President Obama suffers from recurrent plantar fasciitis of his right foot, perhaps due to his love of playing basketball.

clothing and preparing to hit the outdoors. These activities can be great fun but can also be hazardous to your feet, not only because of injuries but also from exposure to extreme weather.



Follow these tips for a winter full of safe and comfortable fun:

- Keep feet warm with waterproof boots and shoes that are properly insulated.
- Wear a pair of good acrylic socks to wick moisture away from the skin.
- Wear only footwear specifically designed for your sport.
- Make sure boots and skates fit well: toes should be roomy, but the heel and ball of your foot should be snug.
- When running on ice and snow, try not to alter how your foot strikes the ground. Instead, shorten your gait. Add spikes to your running shoes when running on ice.
- Feet will sweat when wearing warm socks and insulated boots. Add foot powder inside socks, and change quickly into dry footwear to prevent chilly feet.

### **Beware of Frostbite**

Monitor yourself and especially children for symptoms of frostbite. Toes are especially susceptible and, if severe, frostbite can cause nerve damage and infection.

Watch for:

- Cold, prickly skin
- Numbness
- White, red, bluish or grayish skin
- Waxy-looking or hard skin
- Clumsiness because of muscle and joint stiffness
- Blistering in severe cases

If you suspect frostbite, get out of the cold and remove any wet clothes. Soak affected areas in warm – not hot – water, no more than 108 degrees. Seek medical attention for severe frostbite or if you suspect hypothermia.

Winter sports can lead to blisters, neuromas, sprains, strains, bleeding under the toenail and fractures. Call our office right away if you experience any of these.

### **Trivia**

**Q:** *This condition causes the deformity of the second, third, and fourth toes.*

- A. Fracture
- B. Frostbite
- C. Tarsal Tunnel Syndrome
- D. Hammer toe

Answer D

### **Explanation:**

The term hammer toe refers to a common deformity of the foot in which either the second, third, or fourth toe is bent at the middle joint, so that the tip of the toe is bent downward while the middle of the toe is cocked upward resembling a hammer. The hammer toe deformity is the most common deformity of the small toes. The condition can be present at birth or can develop as a result of wearing poorly fitting shoes.

### **Joke of the Month**



As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, "And what would you like for Christmas?"

The little girl stared at him for a minute, then gasped, "Didn't you get my E-mail?"



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# Holiday Spiced Nuts

Here's a great recipe from Rachael Ray for holiday entertaining or gift giving.

## Ingredients

- 2 cups walnut halves
- 1 cup peeled hazelnuts
- 1 cup whole unsalted cashews
- 1 cup whole pecan halves
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon ground anise
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon coarse black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg, eyeball it
- 1 cup smoked almonds (recommended: Diamond Smokehouse almonds)



## Directions

Heat a large skillet and cook nuts over moderate heat 7 to 8 minutes until golden and well toasted – your nose will know when they are done.

Transfer nuts to a plate and return pan to stove top. Add butter to the pan in small pieces. Melt butter and spice it with anise, cinnamon, pepper and nutmeg. Let butter infuse a minute then pour over nuts. Turn off heat.

Add smoked nuts to the skillet and turn to combine evenly with butter.



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