

The Doctor Is In! TeleHealth vs. In-Office Appointments

Over the last few months, we've adapted to a new normal with social distancing and stay at home orders. Many doctors' offices, including foot and ankle surgeons, have made necessary adjustments to keep patients and staff safe including limiting the number of in-office visits and adhering to stringent cleaning guidelines.

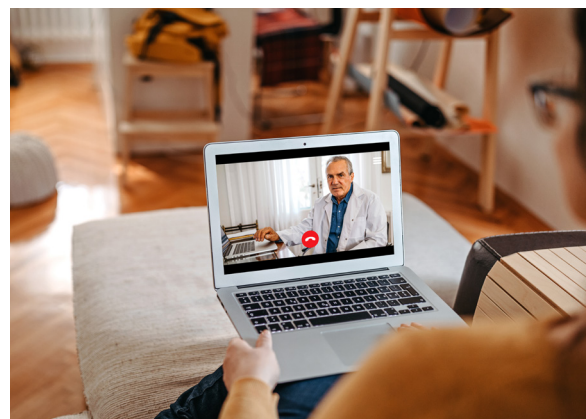
Going to a doctor's office may seem nerve wracking right now, but it's important to continue taking care of your overall wellness, including your feet. Healthy feet and ankles are crucial for balance, mobility and a healthy body. It's just as important to know which foot and ankle issues can be taken care of via TeleHealth and which should be done in person.

Not sure whether your condition requires an in-person appointment with a foot and ankle surgeon?

These Conditions Can be Addressed Via TeleHealth:	These Conditions Require an In-Office Visit:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heel and arch pain, general foot pain • Achilles tendinitis • Metatarsalgia (pain in the ball of your foot) • Skin rashes and athlete's foot • Plantar warts • Big toe pain • Arthritis • Gout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-operative care • Injuries (sprains or trauma, suspected bone fractures) • Infections • Ingrown toenails • Wounds • Foot ulcers • Calf pain with warmth, redness, or swelling, which could possibly be a blood clot

If you suspect an issue that warrants a trip into a foot and ankle surgeon's office, don't worry—practices are taking numerous precautions to keep you safe! Foot and ankle surgeons have ramped up strict cleaning and sanitation procedures before and after patients, providing protective equipment where necessary, spacing out appointments to limit crossing of patients, eliminating use of waiting rooms and taking patients directly into exam rooms and pre-screening patients to ensure no one is sick.

While the current environment may make a routine doctor's visit scarier than normal, it's important to pay attention to your feet and take steps on your own to keep your feet healthy. Make sure you check your feet daily to spot any problems and if you notice any changes, contact a foot and ankle surgeon immediately. **Visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org) to find a foot and ankle surgeon in your area or for tips to keep your feet healthy.**



Summer Footwear Creates New Problems

Summertime brings on warmer temps and the switch from heavier footwear to sandals and flip flops. While flip flops are a nice way to free up your feet, the lack of arch support and stability can create abnormal stress on the band of tissue extending from the heel to the toes (plantar fascia). When this happens, it can trigger plantar fasciitis, which causes pain in the heel when getting up in the morning or after periods of inactivity throughout the day. The pain is persistent and can take time to improve, but supportive footwear can help avoid it worsening. As foot and ankle surgeons, we recommend finding shoes with better support this summer and wear flip flops sparingly if possible. **If you notice pain in your foot, make an appointment with a foot and ankle surgeon by visiting [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org) and using the Find a Physician Search tool.**

Avoiding Running Injuries

While some states are still seeing shelter in place restrictions, many people are still able to find a brief respite by getting outside for a run. Taking a run can be great for your mental and physical health, however if during a run you start to feel like you have something bunched up under the ball of your foot, it could be a Morton's neuroma.

A Morton's neuroma is caused by irritation and compression from repeated pressure on the nerve in the ball of the foot. The irritation causes thickening and enlargement of tissue surrounding the nerve and makes it feel as if something is bunched up under your foot. Symptoms of this type of neuroma typically begin gradually and can go away by massaging the foot or avoiding activities or shoes that irritate it, but the symptoms will worsen over time as the neuroma gets bigger. A persistence irritation can cause even temporary nerve changes to become permanent, so it's important to contact a foot and ankle surgeon right away for early, proper treatment.

Prompt treatment with padding, ice, orthotics or medication may



help you avoid more invasive therapies down the road. If you think you may have a Morton's neuroma or experience any type of foot pain from running, contact a foot and ankle surgeon as soon as you notice symptoms for an accurate diagnosis. **To find one near you, visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org).**

Weekend Warriors: Watch Out for Overuse Injuries

If you're one to save your physical activities or workouts for the weekend—you may be at an increased risk of a foot or ankle injury. If you experience any of the following symptoms, it's time to schedule an appointment with a foot and ankle surgeon.

Aching, stiffness, soreness or tenderness above your heel upward to the area just below your calf muscle. These could be signs of Achilles tendonitis or tendonosis, which typically stem from overuse or trying to do too much too soon. You may notice pain when getting up in the morning or after resting. Pain typically improves with movement, but will eventually worsen with increased activity.

Pain, soreness, swelling, bruising or stiffness in the ankle joint that make it hard to walk. These are classic symptoms of an ankle sprain, an injury to one or more ligaments in the ankle. The sprain's severity depends on whether the ligament is stretched, partially torn or completely torn, as well as on how many ligaments are involved. Ankle fractures are most often caused by the ankle rolling inward or outward, and they can sometimes occur at the same time as an ankle sprain. If you experience any ankle pain, follow the RICE protocol (Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation) and schedule an appointment with a foot and ankle surgeon as soon as possible.



Painful blisters anywhere on your feet. Blisters come from excessive moisture and friction usually caused by poor-fitting and constricting athletic shoes. A foot and ankle surgeon can evaluate your footwear to make sure blisters don't ruin your weekend workout. **To find a foot and ankle surgeon near you, visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org).**