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Staying Safe & Strong Amid COVID-19

With the recent COVID-19 pandemic facing the globe, we're being forced to face a new reality of social distancing and isolation. While most are stuck inside their homes and normal activities are halted for the unforeseeable future, there's one thing that shouldn't stop—being active. Of course, the idea staying active with the constraints of social distancing limits a lot of options, there are some ways to keep your feet and ankles strong and fit while at home.

1. Get creative! Look around your house and see how you can work out while at home. There are plenty ways to work out without a gym or equipment. Do sit ups, pushups, planks, squats and leg lifts.

2. Stay connected to your family and friends. Help to keep yourself accountable by including friends in the mix and check in with everyone to make sure they're staying safe and active, too.

3. Check online resources. There are numerous free resources available online to follow along with fitness videos or other classes. YouTube alone has numerous exercise videos and workout options for you to take advantage of from the safety of your home.

4. E-Workouts could be an option. Check with your local fitness studios on what they're offering. While most are slowly closing their doors, there are many instructors out there offering virtual classes as an alternative to in-person classes.

5. Get outside! You can still get outside and go for walks without putting yourself at risk. Go for a walk, run, walk the dog or go for a hike. You can get some fresh air and activity while still practicing social distancing this way. Even if you feel better staying inside, take scheduled breaks each day to get up from your spot and walk around your home.

6. Play with your kids! With children out of school, this is a great time to have some family fun. Play dress up, build a fort, have a dance party or draw together.

No matter what you do, even if it's something small each day, staying active will help to not only keep your feet and ankles strong, but it will help break up the time stuck at home.

For more information on activities and how to keep your feet and ankles strong, visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org).

Watch for Heel Pain with Spring Activities

After hibernating all winter, nothing beats getting outside and getting active at the first sign of spring weather. The sudden jump in activity after months of laying low with little to no activity increases the risk for heel pain known as plantar fasciitis.

This painful condition results from inflammation of the band extending from the heel to the toes known as the plantar fascia. Repetitive activities like a new exercise routine or walking every day can put stress and strain on foot ligaments leading to inflammation and pain.



Luckily, heel pain is usually relieved easily, but it must be caught and treated early. Heel pain can become chronic and worsen if not dealt with properly.

A foot and ankle surgeon can help you find relief with different therapies, including:

- Stretching exercises
- Activity limitations
- Footwear modifications
- Anti-inflammatory medication
- Physical therapy
- Orthotic devices

While most plantar fasciitis patients respond to non-surgical treatment, there is a chance some may require surgery. If you continue having heel pain with non-surgical treatment, you can discuss options with a foot and ankle surgeon.

Don't let heel pain keep you from enjoying spring weather. If you're experiencing heel pain, see a foot and ankle surgeon immediately so you can continue your normal activities and maintain a healthy lifestyle. **Visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org) to find a foot and ankle surgeon in your area who can help you get back to your normal activities.**

Don't Let Foot Pain Ruin Your Golf Swing

As you schedule tee times this spring, make sure your feet are in good shape before hitting the tee box. Pain in your big toe, heel and the ball of your foot are the most likely spots to affect your golf swing.

The pain in these spots can be the result of stiff joints, stretched-out tissues and sometimes even nerve damage. No need to worry, pain relief is possible, and surgery is often not required.

There are three common foot conditions that affect a golf swing.

Neuromas

Nerves that have thickened, become enlarged and are painful because they've been irritated or compressed. This pain can make it difficult to maintain a good stance during the golf swing.

Arthritis

Arthritis can cause joint pain in the big toe making it difficult to follow through with a swing.

Heel Pain

Other conditions including ankle instability or ankle arthritis can also affect how a golfer's weight shifts during their swing. Achilles tendonitis can throw golfers off balance during a swing and poorly



fitting shoes may cause corns and calluses make standing and walking uncomfortable, which proves troublesome during a long golf game.

Be sure your feet and ankles are in top condition before you hit the links this spring by scheduling an appointment with a foot and ankle surgeon. **Visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org) to find a foot and ankle surgeon in your area.**

Keep Kids' Spring and Summer Sports Injury Free

The transition from winter to spring activities can be a tough switch for young athletes' feet and ankles. Making the move from indoor to outdoor playing surfaces with varying impact can pose many risks for feet and ankles. Going from indoor to outdoor sports without enough time to fully condition the muscles and bones can result in overuse injuries.

If your child is preparing for their spring sports season, follow these six tips to keep their feet and ankles safe and injury free.

1. Start prep before the season. Schedule an appointment for your child to get a health and wellness checkup to identify any health concerns that could lead to injury down the road.

2. Start slow. Ask the coach to gradually increase your child's play time during practice to get their feet and ankles conditioned to the increased activity level required for the sport.

3. Wear proper shoes. Different sports call for different types of shoes. Making sure shoes are appropriate for the sport, fit well, are broken in and athletic shoes will eliminate any discomfort that may arise.

4. Watch their form. Keep an eye out for any changes in your child's form or technique, and have the coach contact you if your child is putting more weight on one side of their body or has started limping.



5. Keep communication open. Make sure your child knows to inform you and the coach if they experience any pain or discomfort as soon as it happens. Many overuse injuries including Achilles tendonitis and shin splints can be subtle and can develop over time.

6. Remember RICE if an injury happens. A foot or ankle injury can usually be healed with **R**est, **I**ce, **C**ompression and **E**levation. If your child complains of any foot or ankle pain, he or she needs to take a break from the sport to recover.

If your child develops any discomfort or pain during their sports season, schedule an appointment with a foot and ankle surgeon to have it evaluated immediately. **Visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org) to find a foot and ankle surgeon in your area.**

