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Stand Firm for Fitness

RECOGNIZE AND TREAT THE TOP FIVE FOOT AND ANKLE INJURIES

MAKE SUMMER 2017 *your summer*. You made that fitness goal a thousand times and have yet to reach it. This summer, set goals and stand firm to reach them. The quickest way to end your fitness quest is an injury. Here are tips to help you recognize the most common foot and ankle injuries and how to treat them before they force you to miss out on summer and your fitness goals.

PLANTAR FASCIITIS

The dreaded Plantar Fasciitis starts off as sharp pain in the heel after rest. The pain slowly gets worse causing more pain for longer periods. When you go from wearing shoes all the time, to no shoes in the summer, the Achilles gets over-used causing pain in the bottom of the heel. By stretching the calf and wearing a sandal you will avoid the increased strain on the Achilles and Plantar Fascia. Some great sandals to keep your feet happy are Oofos®, Chaco®, Birkenstock®, Vionic®, and Naot®.

SPRAINED FOOT AND ANKLE

We have all had it happen with a quick turn of the foot and ankle followed by immediate pain and

swelling. There is a small bone on the outside of your foot called your cuboid. When you turn your foot inward, this bone can get dislocated causing a vague pain from the top-outside of your foot to your toes. It is called Cuboid Subluxation Syndrome. This bone can move out of place causing persistent pain. This is a condition that can be easily treated by a podiatrist. By putting the bone back in place and strapping the foot, the ligaments and bone will heal and you can get back to life with less pain.

SHIN SPLINTS

Shin splints occur when there is excessive force going into the tibia bone. The most common cause of this is poor biomechanics of the foot and ankle, and inefficient running form. If you have started to feel the pain in the front of your shins after running, try shortening your strides. Studies show that this reduces stress and increases efficiency. Also check your feet. Get your foot wet and then step on some dry cement, if you see your whole foot imprint you are flat footed and could benefit from an orthotic to help your foot function more efficiently. Try running on a flat trail

rather than the road. Running on pavement can cause increased stress and the tilt of the road can lead to imbalance. A soft flat trail will reduce this.

STRESS FRACTURE

Stress fracture of the foot is a common over-training injury, but it can also happen in everyday life. A stress fracture is a small break in the outer shell of the bone. This small crack causes pain, swelling, and inability to walk or run comfortably. Avoid this injury by wearing shoes that are not overly flexible. If you can bend your shoe in half or the front of the shoe can bend like a wet noodle, it is likely too flexible and it may lead to a stress fractures. If you think you have a stress fracture, a simple digital X-ray taken in the office can diagnose it. Treatment for a stress fracture is 4–6 weeks of reduced activity with a stiff soled shoe or boot.

INGROWN TOENAILS

Ingrown toenails can be painful. An ingrown is the result of a portion of the nail puncturing the bordering skin. The body then creates an infection trying to rid itself of this foreign body. Avoid ingrown nails by keeping your nails short and cutting them straight across.

Stand firm and reach your fitness goals this summer. Avoid doing too much, too fast, too soon. If something feels off, take a 3-day break from that activity and then slowly re-introduce it. If the pain returns, it is time for professional help. Enjoy the summer and good luck reaching your goals pain and injury free! 



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