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## Back to School-Prime Time for Foot Pain

Every fall season, foot and ankle specialists see many new instances of foot pain among young athletes. Football, soccer and basketball are the sports that cause the most problems.

Parents and coaches should think twice before coaxing young players to "play through" foot and ankle pain, according to the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons.



**One way foot and ankle specialists treat foot pain in children and teenagers is with custom foot orthotics.** Prescription orthotics can be very helpful for a variety of foot ailments, including flat arches and foot and leg pain. They can cushion the feet, provide comfort, and support the arches, but most importantly they can **correct biomechanical foot problems and cure long-standing foot issues.**

They match the contours of your feet precisely and are designed for the way you move. Orthotics are only manufactured after a podiatrist has conducted a complete evaluation of your feet and ankles.

Functional orthotics are designed to control abnormal motion. They may be used to treat foot pain caused by abnormal motion; they can also be used to treat injuries such as shin splints or tendinitis or to treat foot problems such as plantar fasciitis, bursitis, and heel pain. Clinical research studies have shown that podiatrist-prescribed foot orthotics decrease foot pain and improve function.

**Watch for our special promotions coming this October for children's foot orthotics.**

### Our Office

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### Office hours:

Monday:  
09:30 AM - 08:00 PM  
Tuesday:  
09:00 AM - 05:00 PM  
Wednesday:  
Closed  
Thursday:  
09:00 AM - 06:00 PM  
Friday:  
09:00 AM - 05:00 PM

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## Use Common Sense to Prevent Children's Sports Injuries

Fall sports are in full swing! Whether your child enjoys soccer, football, rugby, lacrosse, ice hockey, track or just a friendly neighborhood pick-up game, you want them to enjoy the activity and stay injury-free.



But all too often we as parents have to rush our child to the emergency room with a sports-related injury. In fact, more than 2.6 million U.S. children and teens will have to visit an ER for sports and recreation-related injuries each year (CDC).

### Common Children's Sports-Related Injuries

**Growth Plate Injuries** - growth plates are found at the forearm, hand and fingers, foot bones and upper and lower leg. Any injury to these areas requires specialized assistance from a foot doctor.

**Heat-Related Illness** - don't ignore dangerous heat injuries like dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke as these can sometimes be fatal.

**Repetitive Motion Injuries** - stress fractures or tendonitis can develop when muscles and tendons are overused. Plantar fasciitis, an inflammation of the tissue running on the bottom of the foot, often occurs when jumping or running on hard surfaces.

**Strains and Sprains** - the most common sports-related injury is an ankle sprain, where the joint's ligament is injured. A strain is an injury to a muscle or tendon.

### Treatment for Sports-Related Injuries

Many injuries respond positively to R.I.C.E. treatment - **Rest**, **Ice** the area, apply **Compression** and **Elevate** the leg.

If pain persists or the injury is serious like a dislocation, obvious fracture or extreme swelling, seek medical attention right away. Bring your child to our office for any foot or ankle-related injuries.

### Preventing Sports Injuries

Keep your child in the game by:

- Have your child gradually build up endurance.
- Watch that your child has the opportunity for warm-ups, cool downs and stretching at each workout.
- Outfit your child with the appropriate well-fitting footwear and protective gear for each activity.
- Provide water for good hydration before, during and after games and practices.
- Watch for any sign of pain - your child shouldn't "work it out" which can aggravate an injury.

## History FootNote

Kerri Strug famously executed a flawless vault landing during the 1996 Atlanta Olympics even with an ankle damaged by a sprain with tendon damage, boosting her team to the first U.S. women's gymnastics all-around Olympic gold medal.

## Celebrity Foot Focus

A turf toe injury helped end Jonathan Ogden's career with the Baltimore Ravens.

## Joke of the Month



Most Wanted

Little Ronnie's kindergarten class

was on a field trip to their local police station where they saw pictures tacked to a bulletin board of the 10 most wanted criminals. One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person.

'Yes,' said the policeman. 'The detectives want very badly to capture him.'

Little Ronnie asked, 'Why didn't you keep him when you took his picture?'

## Don't Ignore Signs of Turf Toe in your Young Athlete

If your child complains of big toe pain, swelling or limited movement at the base of the toe, he or she may have a turf toe injury.

Turf toe occurs when an athlete pushes off the ground with the toes in sports like football, soccer, wrestling, gymnastics and basketball. Dancers who repeatedly jam their toe can experience turf toe as well. The ligaments of the joint are sprained either suddenly or over a period of time due to repetitive motion.



### Treating Turf Toe

Any persistent toe pain or swelling should be examined in our office. If resting and icing the area doesn't help, our treatment plans include:

- Taping the big toe to the next toe to immobilize the joint
- Using a walking boot or even a cast to further stabilize the area
- Recommending over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication
- Prescribing special shoe inserts that will stabilize and support the big toe

In severe cases we may recommend surgery to repair soft tissues and restore normal joint movement.

It may take several weeks for the pain and swelling to lessen. Some individuals benefit from physical therapy to strengthen and stretch the toe area.

You can prevent turf toe in your child by always seeing that he wears the proper sports footwear for each activity. Look for shoes that provide ample support to prevent excessive bending of the toes when pushing off.

## How To Choose the Best Athletic Shoes for your Child

Well-fitting athletic shoes specific to each sport can make a big difference when it comes to your child's foot health while engaged in sporting activities.

Shoes that are not flexible enough or those that don't fit well can restrict the foot's natural development and movement. A poor fit or quality can affect athletic performance and can be painful and may even result in sports injuries and serious ongoing foot problems.



### Tips for Choosing your Child's Athletic Shoes

- Shop at shoe stores that stock many styles and brands and that have salespeople who can professionally measure your child's foot.
  - Plan your shopping trip for later in the day when feet are largest, and grab your child's own athletic socks for trying on shoes.
  - Consider each activity when buying shoes. For example, tennis shoes are specifically designed for side-to-side movement while running shoes have extra cushioning and support forward movement.
- ....continued on page 4

### Trivia

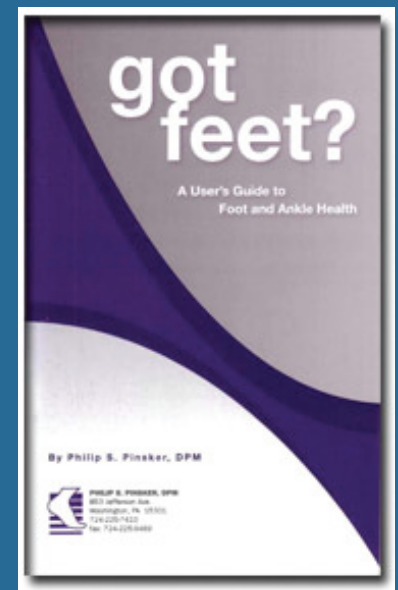
*"But the days grow short, when you reach September" Is a line from which famous song?*

- September Song
- Farewell To summer
- Back To School
- The Autumn Melody

**Answer is A.**

September Song by Frank Sinatra

**Receive your FREE copy of Dr. Pinsker's book today!**



I wrote this book because too many people suffer from foot and ankle pain unnecessarily.

~ Dr. Phil Pinsker

....continued from page 3 **How To Choose the Best Athletic Shoes for your Child**

- Look for high quality, breathable materials like leather, canvas and suede. Synthetics don't breathe and can restrict movement which can result in ingrown toenails or hammertoes.
- Lace the shoes properly and observe your child walking around the store. The heels should not slip at all.
- If you're buying cleats, select those with multiple cleats on the heel to avoid heel pain. Younger children may benefit from shorter cleats - maximum of ½" long - to reduce the risk of knee and ankle injuries.

## September 21st is Backpack Awareness Day

Backpack Awareness Day is a time to consider safety and good health practices for your child's backpack. Is the backpack or bag too heavy for your child's size and strength? When a backpack is too heavy or is worn incorrectly, your child may experience back pain, strained muscles and joints, tripping and even lifelong back problems. Learn more about backpack safety at KidsHealth.org.



Dr. Philip Pinsker, DPM

"Click on photo for more information about the Doctor."

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