



In this Issue:

- Patient Avoids Hospitals by Coming to Westfield Foot and Ankle
- Swapping Foot Fractures for Vitamin D
- Winter Tips for Diabetic Foot Care

Patient Avoids Hospitals by Coming to Westfield Foot and Ankle

After a visit to a nurse practitioner and a trip to the emergency room, Ann Crutchfield didn't know where to turn next to get treatment for the venous stasis ulcer that had developed on her lower left shin. Crutchfield was told that her only options were to visit a hospital in downtown Indianapolis or to check herself into a Hamilton County hospital. Both options were unacceptable to her, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Scared, in pain and unsure of who to go to or how to treat the ulcer, Crutchfield finally found relief after she was referred to Westfield Foot and Ankle by Dr. Andy Dillingham of IU Health Physicians Primary Care, one of the many providers that refer their patients to our office for foot and ankle problems and wound care. "I had no idea that taking care of a wound would be totally beyond the skills of emergency room doctors and nurses," said Crutchfield.

A venous stasis ulcer is a wound on the skin caused by pooled blood. These ulcers occur most often on the legs. Veins have a series of valves that help the blood move in the right direction. When these valves fail to work properly, blood can move backward and pool in the veins. The pooled blood pushes fluid and blood cells out of the veins and into nearby tissue. The leaked fluids irritate the tissue and cause inflammation. Over time, the inflammation can breakdown tissue and lead to ulcers.

Risk Factors

Factors that may increase the risk of venous stasis include:

- Diseases or conditions of the veins, including:
 - Deep vein thrombosis
 - A defect at birth
 - Varicose veins and surgery to treat varicose veins
 - Phlebitis — inflammation of vessels
 - Trauma to leg or veins
- Obesity
- Family history of chronic venous disease
- Heart failure
- Inactivity
- Injection drug use



Smoking is also harmful to blood vessels and may play a role in venous stasis.

Dr. Sullivan is a wound specialist as well as a podiatrist. Not all podiatrists are wound specialists. Dr. Sullivan has been a certified wound specialist since 2007 through the American Academy of Wound Management. By offering wound care at our office, Dr. Sullivan can save patients time and money as well as relieve hospital resources and minimize patient exposure which has been beneficial during the pandemic.

"Dr. Sullivan was easy, confident and had a cheerful attitude even upon seeing my ulcer. He looked right at it, cleaned it up. He seemed to know what he was doing and told me exactly how to take care of it," said Crutchfield. "I have a wonderful husband who helped me do everything Dr. Sullivan recommended."

Crutchfield is now on a path to healing and being pain-free. "I have had wonderful results! Dr. Sullivan seems to have the magic touch and makes it look as easy as pie."

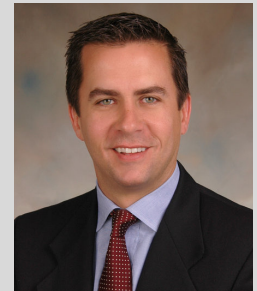
Westfield Foot and Ankle

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Office Hours

Mon: 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Tues: 9:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Wed: 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Thurs: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Fri: 8:30 a.m.- 12 noon
Sat. & Sun. - Closed

Meet Our Doctor



**David R. Sullivan,
DPM, FACFAS, FACCWS**

www.westfieldfoot.com



Foot Funnies

What did the spatula say to the big spoon? "You wisk me off my feet."

♥ **HAPPY**
Valentine's
DAY ♥

Swapping Foot Fractures for Vitamin D

Winter always means shorter, colder days with limited sunlight, which makes it harder to maintain healthy vitamin D levels in your body. As we embark on our first full winter during a pandemic, getting outside is even harder, which makes it even more important to get enough vitamin D. Not enough vitamin D can lead to osteoporosis, bone and muscle pain and increase the risk of stress fractures in your feet.

Calcium usually gets all the credit for building bone density, but it's vitamin D that manages your calcium intake allowing the body to absorb both calcium and phosphate. If your vitamin levels dip, the weightbearing bones in your feet and ankles are affected as they're not strong enough to withstand the pressure of supporting your body. Typically, the majority of patients who are treated for foot fractures and also have low vitamin D levels are over the age of 50, have limited sun exposure or a darker skin complexion or have a medical condition causing fat malabsorption.

Luckily, there are ways to increase your vitamin D levels without increasing your sun exposure. You can eat fortified foods rich in vitamin D, such as fatty fish like salmon, cheese, meat and milk or take a daily supplement. The US Food and Drug Administration daily value for vitamin D is 400 IU, but those with a deficiency may need more.

Article courtesy of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons



If you're experiencing frequent foot fractures or unexplainable foot pain, make an appointment with our office. We can do a simple lab test to check your vitamin D levels and discuss proper treatment options.

Winter Tips for Diabetic Feet

Winter can be dangerous for your feet if you're living with diabetes. Colder temperatures mixed with poor blood circulation and possible nerve damage in your extremities make your feet vulnerable to serious complications or infection. To keep your feet healthy and safe this winter, take these precautions.

Watch Out for Snow

Moisture that collects on your socks and in between your toes can form bacteria and lead to infection. If you walk in heavy snow or slush, be sure to change out of your wet socks as soon as possible and towel dry your feet paying close attention to in between your toes.

Moisturize

Use a daily moisturizer to avoid dry feet and to keep your skin from itching or cracking.

Avoid Direct Heat

Keep your feet away from direct heat. Normal winter activities like warming your feet by a fire or cranking up the foot heater in your car can pose problems. The numbness caused by nerve damage can make it impossible to feel the heat on your feet and could lead to second- or third degree burns. It's best to keep your feet away from direct heat and to avoid warming aids such as electric blankets, heated shoe inserts or heating pads and to keep your feet out of hot water. To make sure, test your bath water with your hand or a thermometer first to make sure it's safe for your feet.

Proper Shoes

Wearing well-fitting shoes with supportive soles and a roomy toe box to reduce cramping. Keep in mind how different sock textures will affect the wear and walking conditions during the winter months.

Article courtesy of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons



Regular Exams

Be sure to contact our office to regularly schedule foot exams as they can help spot any diabetes-related foot issues early and avoid further complications.

For more diabetic foot care tips check out the blog on our website, www.westfieldfoot.com.

Good to know... Dr. David Sullivan is a board-certified wound specialist and can perform in office procedures such as wound care, biopsies, skin grafts, ingrown toenail removal, etc. Having patients come to our office vs. a hospital setting can help relieve the hospital resources as well as minimizing patient exposure.