

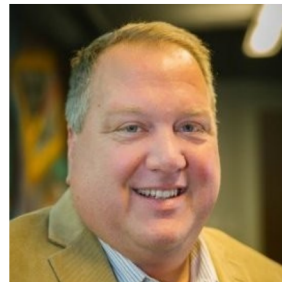


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## Patient Credits Excellent Treatment and Care for Saving His Feet

Steve Brennan was referred to Westfield Foot and Ankle and Dr. David Sullivan by his physician. Steve had a cut on his foot that wasn't healing and because he was a diabetic, he knew he needed to have it treated right away. His doctor originally only listed providers who were in Steve's health plan. However, when he asked who she would send her husband to for treatment, she replied that she would send him to Dr. Sullivan.



Even though Westfield Foot and Ankle was out of network at that time for Steve, it was important to him that he be able to see the best provider for his foot, especially since he had neuropathy. Steve needed to remain mobile because of his career in technical sales for the financial services industry. His career required him to travel on a regular basis to California and London.

### Diabetes and Neuropathy

With diabetes, sugar builds up in the blood and it can cause nerve damage. Called diabetic neuropathy, this damage can be painful and make the feet tingle. For some individuals, neuropathy takes away all feeling in their feet. And, when that happens, small cuts or sores can become big problems.

If a diabetic patient doesn't feel an injury, they can't care for it and it may become infected. Diabetes can also reduce the amount of blood flowing to the feet. In turn, this makes it harder for the body to heal. A minor wound can become an infected chronic ulcer if left untreated. And, left untreated, an infected ulcer can lead to deeper bone infection and eventual amputation. When diabetic patients have a wound that won't heal, they need to be seen by a wound specialist.

### Certified Wound Specialist

Dr. Sullivan is not just a board-certified foot surgeon, he is also a Certified Wound Specialist. 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 is especially beneficial during flu season and when Covid-19 cases spike.

Since his initial visit in 2016, Steve has continued to be a patient of Dr. Sullivan. Over the years, he has received care for several conditions related to his diabetes: hammertoes, surgery for infections and treatment of additional diabetic ulcers. He chose to keep on seeing Dr. Sullivan for care because Dr. Sullivan is conservative in his treatment.

"He isn't quick to rush. He will take his time and see if other solutions will work," said Steve. "I thought I was going to lose my big toe because it was infected badly. We even had a ramp put up outside the house for a scooter. He took his time and tried different things and I don't know how, but he saved my big toe." Because Dr. Sullivan is conservative in his treatment, he also likes how "Dr. Sullivan doesn't force him to do things or purchase products that aren't really necessary."

Steve appreciates how the staff goes above and beyond to take care of patients and meet their needs. Initially scheduled for a surgical procedure in January of 2023, the staff was able to accommodate him and find a date in December. He requested to have the procedure before the end of the year due to how the condition was affecting his daily life. This type of care and meeting the patient's needs, "comes from the top down," Steve said. He appreciates the individual care he receives from Dr. Sullivan and that he never feels rushed. He likes that he can get his X-rays on site. He is also impressed by how the staff has no turnover. "They really have become part of the family. They care about me," Steve said.

He recommends that other individuals come to Westfield Foot and Ankle because of the individual treatment they will receive, how Dr. Sullivan keeps up with the latest medical and technological advances and because of Dr. Sullivan's personality. "Dr. Sullivan is from the small town of Delphi and has a small-town personality, but big city knowledge. He is one of the best doctors I've ever seen. He is very good at explaining things to me, what I need to do and what my options are," Steve said.

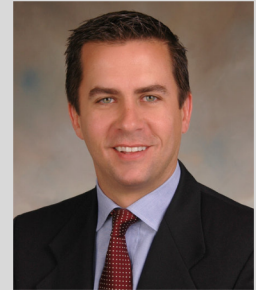
## Westfield Foot and Ankle

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### Office Hours

Mon: 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Tues: 9:00 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Wed: 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Thurs: 8:30 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](http://www.westfieldfoot.com)



Happy  
Valentine's  
Day



## Don't Let Foot Pain Stop Your New Year's Fitness Resolution

Did you make a New Year's resolution to start an exercise program or new sport to improve your health? While starting a new exercise program is a great way to help with weight loss or improve cardiovascular health, it also puts new pressure on your feet which can lead to sports injuries...unless you follow these three important tips for safely exercising!

### Start Small for Success

Whether you're starting a new running program, or jumping into deadlifts and squats, caution is key. With any new movement, your body needs time to adjust. Don't expect to get off the couch and run five miles on your first day. Instead, start small with your training and always stretch first. Active warmups before any exercise help prevent foot and ankle injuries, especially before running. In your first week, mix running and walking and don't go more than a mile. If that pace feels comfortable, you can slowly increase your distance or speed the next week. (The safest way to train is to limit your increases to 10%. Whether that means you run 10% farther or faster is your choice.) If walking is your new exercise of choice, check out our blog under exercise on how to start a walking workout.

Why is slow and steady the best way to try a new exercise? It gives your body (and feet!) time to adjust to new movements and time to build up the muscles that will support your activity. If you rush into a new sport at full force, you risk an overuse injury which could send you into our office with problems such as heel pain or tendinitis.



### How to Choose Shoes

Maybe your exercise resolutions have you getting serious about one sport. If that's the case, it's important to wear the right shoes for your chosen activity. If you're playing tennis or basketball more than three times a week, choose shoes specifically designed for those sports. (The same is true for cleat-based sports, such as soccer or football.)

But what if you're just walking or hitting the cardio equipment at your gym? In this case, cross-training athletic shoes are the way to go. These are athletic shoes with forefoot flexibility, so you can run when necessary. They also have lateral support, so you can step from side-to-side in Zumba class or on the elliptical. Finally, they have good support to protect your feet from the impact of any exercise.

And, if you are starting your new exercise program at a gym or sports facility, don't forget to always wear shoes especially in the locker room and shower to protect your feet from injuries, fungal infections and even some types of heel pain. For supportive footwear in the shower, locker room and even by the pool, consider Powerstep Sandals which are available to try on and purchase in our office.

### Orthotics Can Help Prevent Injuries

Sometimes the structure of your body (biomechanics) increases your injury risk. That means even the best

## New Electronic Medical Records System Coming in February

On Monday, Feb. 13 we will be changing our medical record system (EMR) from TRAKnet to ModMed. This change should make it easier for patients to access their medical information and we will have a more modernized system to work with in the office.

Patients will be able to log in to a patient portal to directly input their information as a new patient, update medical history, access medical records, access statements and make online payments.

During our first few weeks, please allow a little extra time for your appointment. We will be doing our best to learn the new system and work out any issues on our end.



athletic shoes won't protect your feet when you exercise. If your feet are flat, if your arches are too high or if your legs are different lengths, you may need extra support. Orthotics could be your solution. They can help support our body so your feet, toes and ankles don't get overworked, and they can improve your efficiency when starting a new sport, especially running. To make sure you get the correct size and fit, contact our office for an appointment.

All too often, people ignore or 'walk off' foot pain. But that bad habit turns minor problems into major foot concerns. So, what's the most important way to protect your feet? Call our office at the first sign of foot pain. We'll get you in quickly for an appointment with Dr. Sullivan and get you back on track to meeting those fitness goals!

## What You Need to Know About Foot Pain and Heart Disease

Since February is American Heart Month, your Westfield podiatry team has a crucial message: the first warning of heart disease could come from your feet! Some of your recent foot symptoms could be signs of bigger problems brewing in your body.

### Foot Signals and Heart Disease

Have you ever started walking and noticed that your feet or legs hurt? You might have chalked it up to bad shoes or overdoing it on exercise. But, in fact, it could be the first sign of peripheral arterial disease (PAD).

With PAD, your lower extremities don't get enough oxygen. So walking or exercising may be painful. But what's the reason your legs aren't getting that oxygen?

Atherosclerosis — or hardening of your arteries — triggers PAD. It also raises your risk for serious cardiovascular conditions, such as heart attacks or strokes. Now, when we say hardening,



*Raising Awareness for Peripheral Artery Disease*  
The Way To My Heart.org / Red-Sock-Day

we really mean that the arteries become narrow. And this narrowing begins when plaque builds on your artery walls, making it harder for oxygen-rich blood to travel from your heart to the rest of your body. Especially those far-away legs and feet.

### Diagnosing PAD

Because PAD symptoms can look like many other diseases, it's often hard to diagnose. That's why it's very important

to pay attention to small details.

Not all foot pain is a sign of PAD. But if the pain shows up when you move, and disappears when you rest, it's worth discussing with your doctor. If it's PAD, you may also notice leg cramps. You may lose hair in the spots where your feet or legs hurt. And the pain could be joined by a numb or cold feeling, as well as by changes in skin color.

If you've noticed any of these PAD warning signs, you should tell your podiatrist right away. There are easy, non-invasive tests that detect PAD. And early detection is key. Because, with lifestyle changes and medications, we can keep your disease in control. But, without treatment, your risk for serious cardiac events skyrockets.

### Treating PAD

If you're diagnosed with PAD, there are several ways to treat the disease. Often, simple changes like quitting smoking, reducing your alcohol intake and choosing a healthier diet can make

can make a big difference. It's also important to get more exercise with PAD. While symptoms may worsen when you are exercising, with time you'll be able to walk longer with less pain. Finally, some individuals with PAD need medication or medical interventions, but a specialist can help with those decisions.

Remember, undiagnosed heart conditions are dangerous. And foot pain could be the first sign of a problem. So if it's getting harder to walk, don't wait. Schedule an appointment with our office right away, to protect your feet...and your heart!



**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.

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