

Foot Notes

Brought to you by Dr. Powers

News and Updates **July 2016**



Feeling the Pinch: Tarsal Tunnel Syndrome

Meet the Doctor

Kevin Powers, DPM



Kevin Powers has been helping people with foot and ankle pain for 25 years. He is considered the top expert in Southern Indiana, as his opinion is highly valued by the doctors who refer patients from the specialties of internal medicine, pain management, emergency room doctors, nurse practitioners, family practice, OB/GYN, orthopedic surgeons, and general surgeons.



American Board
of Foot and
Ankle Surgery



Association of
Extremity
Nerve Surgeons

Right about now, mid-summertime, you might be fighting the good fight against those pesky moles tunneling through your lawn, but did you know you have tunnels in your own body that could be having some pesky problems of their own?

The tarsal tunnel lies on the inside of the ankle bone and houses tendons, veins, arteries and nerves, including the posterior tibial nerve. When this nerve becomes compressed, or “pinched,” it can cause tingling, burning, numbness, and pain along its path, from the ankle through the foot.

A close cousin of the more commonly known carpal tunnel syndrome in the wrist, tarsal tunnel syndrome occurs as a result of injuries, like ankle sprains, or diseases, like arthritis, that cause swelling and place pressure upon the nerve. Those with flat feet are especially prone to the problem, as their heels tend to tilt outward, again placing pressure upon and squeezing the nerve. Dr. Powers is the only foot specialist in the area who has special surgical training for pinched nerves such as tarsal tunnel syndrome.

If you’re feeling the pinch of tarsal tunnel syndrome, forget about your lawn care and take a load off to rest your foot. Ice and medication can help reduce pain and swelling. You may find orthotics that provide arch support helpful, as well as physical therapy. Many times TTS is misdiagnosed as neuropathy.

Want to learn more? Ask our friendly staff—they’re always happy to help!



Dr. Powers recently attended a nerve surgery conference at the University of New England, in the beautiful state of Maine, where some of the top peripheral nerve surgeons in the nation gathered to discuss current treatments and surgical techniques for leg and foot nerve problems.

That's Dr. Powers with the red IU scrubs in the anatomy lab at the medical school.



Mark Your Calendars

- July 4** Independence Day—celebrate the Stars and Stripes.
- July 6** National Fried Chicken Day—perfect for a picnic!
- July 8** Video Games Day—escape the summer sun for some indoor fun.
- July 20** National Lollipop Day—we're suckers for this one!
- July 23** National Hot Dog Day—pass the ketchup, please.
- July 30** National Cheesecake Day—another great idea for using blueberries!





Low Impact. Low Risk.

Sometimes you just need a little break! A vacation from work, a snack while studying, or opting to walk instead of drive can all do wonders to refresh your body and mind. Well, guess what? The same is true when it comes to your workout routine. Not only does cross-training keep you from getting in a mental rut, but it can also keep you from getting physically injured, too!

When you intersperse low-impact activities like biking, swimming, rowing, and yoga with high-impact workouts, like running, you reduce your risk of such overuse injuries as plantar fasciitis, stress fractures, shin splints, Achilles tendinitis, and more. That means you avoid pain and problems that could sideline you without having to stop being physically active—it's a win-win!

So, take advantage of the summer weather and go jump in a lake, hop on a bike, or grab a paddle, and avoid injury at the same time!

For more tips and suggestions on how you can incorporate low-impact exercise options into your fitness regimen, just ask us. We're happy to help you stay injury-free!

Deliciously Different Ideas for Blueberries



It's National Blueberry Month, and what better way to celebrate than with these deliciously different ideas for enjoying the low-calorie, highly nutritious, antioxidant-boosting, body-protecting, heart-healthy super fruit!

Top it off – sure, you can sprinkle blueberries over cereal, oatmeal, yogurt or ice cream, but making a brûlée is even better!

Drink 'em up – add a handful, frozen or fresh, to your beverage of choice.

Blend in – blend blueberries into sauces, dressings, and dips.

A different take on what you bake – besides muffins, scones, breads, and pies, why not bake some homemade granola bars?

Creatively can – jam is great, but try canning some blueberry BBQ sauce or salsa to spice things up.

We don't know about you, but we're pretty hungry now—blueberries anyone?

Dr. Powers Foot & Ankle

1791 West 3rd St.
Bloomington, IN 47403
(812) 333-4422

IU Bedford Hospital
Bedford, IN
(812) 277-1000

www.BloomingtonPodiatrist.com

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Get Shin Splint Savvy

If your shins are feeling tender and sore with every step of your run, you may have just joined the shin splint club! This common sports injury typically occurs due to overuse, imbalances, or repetitive stress that causes the muscles along your shin bones to become irritated and inflamed.

Biomechanics, a sudden change in training, inadequate warming up, and worn out shoes are most often the culprits behind the problem. Luckily, each of these is easy to fix! First of all, make a point of taking the time to warm up properly prior to your workout. Add duration and intensity slowly—gradual is good! Replace old running shoes when you notice visible wear—every 400-500 miles is usually a good rule of thumb. Lastly, when you get those new running shoes, slip some custom orthotics inside. These are fitted to your unique feet and designed to correct specific issues you may have with your gait.

In the meantime, if you're shins are unhappy right now, you can ease your pain with ice and anti-inflammatory medication, stretching exercises that strengthen the affected muscles, and of course, that four letter word: rest. Take a break from running and go for a swim or bike ride for a change, and remember, don't rush back into your running routine, especially now that you're shin splint savvy!

