

Foot Notes

Brought to you by Dr. Powers

News and Updates **May 2018**



Rainy Day Running Tips

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

Spring showers can bring more than just flowers—they can bring uncomfortable foot conditions from wet feet and shoes!

When running in wet weather, it is inevitable that you will not be able to avoid every puddle. Wearing moisture-wicking socks can help to a point, but not if your shoes are soaked! When the outer layer of your skin absorbs moisture it can shrivel, itch, and even become sore and prone to blisters—not exactly what a runner wants to endure. To make matters worse, the moisture can rob your skin of its natural oils, eventually causing dry skin and painful cracks—again, not conducive to enjoying a run. On top of all that, damp and dark are fungi's best friends, making wet feet and soggy shoes the perfect environments for bacteria to thrive. Man—when it rains it pours!

So what's a rainy day runner to do? Simple. Just follow these tips to avoid the wet weather blues:

Try your best to stay clear of a running course that is apt to be sloppy and full of puddles. Wear moisture-wicking socks and break out some duct tape. That's right—slapping on a bit of duct tape to the tips of your shoes can actually help to keep moisture away! You might want to try slathering your feet with some salve before you head out, too, which can help to reduce the amount of moisture your skin absorbs. As soon as possible, get out of your wet shoes and socks and dry your feet thoroughly. If you are driving someplace to go for a run, bring a towel and pack dry socks and shoes to change into when heading home. It's also important to alternate the shoes you wear to make sure they have ample time to dry out between workouts. Hint: stuffing them with some newspaper can help speed up the process.

The bottom line? You don't have to wait for skies to clear. Follow these tips and you won't miss a step, no matter what the weather brings!



Exercise Smart to Prevent Overuse Injuries

As much as a hyped up, '80s music-fueled training montage might make it seem, going "all out" is not the wise way to pursue your fitness goals.

Our bodies react to the stress and exertion we place on them by growing stronger and more efficient—that's what working out is all about. However, this exertion must start out lightly and be gradually ramped up over time. Place too much stress on the body before it can properly handle it and you risk overuse injuries such as Achilles tendinitis and stress fractures.

Here are some general tips for staying active while avoiding overuse injuries:

- **Get Checked Out Before Starting a New Regimen** – If you plan on picking up a new exercise such as running, cycling, or swimming, get a physical before doing so. Your doctor can detect muscle imbalances and other factors that may increase your risk of injury.
- **Warm Up and Cool Down** – It might seem trivial, but 5-10 minutes of stretching before and after a workout can make a difference in maintaining your body.
- **Gradually Increase Your Intensity** – Start simple and build up your workout level no more than 10 percent each week. This may involve running just a bit further or lifting just a bit more weight. Don't tempt yourself to beat others; go at your own pace.

Slow and steady may not always win the race in real life, but it will keep you from getting sidelined! If you have any questions about exercise levels or pain you experience during exercise, please let us know. We'll help you stay in action!



"One last thing. I want you each to wear these in the off chance that your reserve chute fails."

Mark Your Calendars

- May 1** National Mother Goose Day – Share your favorite nursery rhyme with your child.
- May 4** Star Wars Day – Plan on seeing Solo later this month?
- May 6** National Nurses Day – Recognizing those devoted to care.
- May 9** National Lost Sock Memorial Day – They're in the angels' lint trap now.
- May 13** National Apple Pie day – Can't get much more American!
- May 18** National Bike to Work Day – If you can, of course.
- May 24** National Scavenger Hunt Day – We hid your first clue under your chair (just kidding!)
- May 30** National Senior Health and Fitness Day – It's never too late to start moving!



Exercising with Your Children Isn't Just Good for Them



Many children nowadays spend a lot of time sitting in front of the TV, in a classroom, or in a car seat. But then again, many adults spend a lot of time sitting in similar situations. When family time comes, some active ideas can make a significant difference to members young and old.

Exercise doesn't always have to mean running laps or pumping iron. There are many lower-key ways of getting more movement into the lives of you and your little ones. Try some of these to see what everyone likes:

- **Take a Walk Before or After Dinner** – With a long day of work or school over with, a walk as a family can do wonders for body and mind. Younger children can alternate time in and out of a stroller, while older children can engage in some stair climbing or “I spy” kinds of games.
- **Turn Commercials into Mini Workouts** – Make these breaks work for you by engaging in some quick sit-ups, squats, or jumping jacks. Someone in the family can yell out exercise orders each break for more fun.
- **Sign Up for Charity Races and Other Active Events** – Volunteer events that are both fun and active can help instill a sense of community in children (and parents, too!) while keeping you moving. You don't have to be a trained runner to participate in many area 5K walks or fun runs.

When the family is exercising together, it's not just about a healthy body. It's also about quality time! Talk with and encourage each other along the way.



How to Make Pancakes Healthier

We know that pancakes are not a dish we could take away from many fans. They'd tell us to pry the syrup from their warm, sticky fingers! While white flour and sugar don't tend to be the most beneficial choices for a healthy diet, a few decisions can make this classic plate better for you.

Here's how to hack your flapjack:

- **Go Homemade** – Those boxed mixes don't give you much control. Toss 'em and go homemade instead! Recipes don't take long: usually about 5 minutes to whip up what you need.
- **Add Oats to Your Batter** – Both rolled and quick oats are effective additions, especially if you like soft and chewy textures.
- **Replace Eggs with Mashed Bananas** – Instead of an egg, mash up a banana with a fork and add it instead. We probably don't have to tell you this will add banana flavor.
- **Replace Fat with Applesauce** – This is one of the better known tricks, but still effective! If you need half a cup of oil, use half a cup of applesauce instead.
- **Replace Syrup with Maple Yogurt** – 3 ounces of plain Greek yogurt with a teaspoon of maple syrup mixed in can be a delicious substitute for syrup alone, and replace plenty of empty calories.

Experiment with different mixes until you find what you like. Viva la pancake!

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Do You Have a Pinched Nerve?

We might not always be aware we're in a pinch in life until it's too late, but signs of a pinched nerve can be *much* easier to detect.

Nerves are sensitive instruments, so when something begins to place excessive pressure on one—such as a bone, tendon, or scar tissue, it will tend to have a response. Injuries, arthritis, repetitive work motions, and extra weight can all be risk factors for nerve entrapment.

Patients with a pinched nerve might describe the sensation differently. It all depends on what kind of nerve is being affected and how. In some cases, you may feel numbness or a decreased sensation. In other cases, you might feel a sharp, aching, or burning sensation. Muscles might also feel weak in the area, and you might also get a frequent feeling of "pins and needles" or that the area has "fallen asleep."

In many cases, nerve problems are said to feel worse during sleep. Just brushing the bedsheet can cause pain or abnormal sensations at times.

Some instances of a pinched nerve will clear on their own with rest, but others will require treatment or surgery. Please let us know if pain or numbness have persisted in your foot or ankle for more than several days. The sooner a problem is discovered, the more effective treatment can be!

