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THE NEXT STEP



Dr. Andrew Schneider

Your first step towards a pain-free life



TREATING HAMMER TOES WITHOUT SURGERY

Hammer Toes occur as a result of a muscle imbalance in the toes, causing them to deform in different ways. We can help prevent and treat this problem in a variety of ways.

First, look for shoes that have plenty of room in the toes. Next, we can make your foot mechanics more stable, to slow or stop hammer toes from progressing. The easiest way to do this is with the use of a custom orthotic. An orthotic is an insole that is made especially for you. It works to make your feet work in a more efficient and stable manner. This will reduce the excessive pull and prevent deformities from occurring. It will also help to prevent a hammer toe. If you already have a minor toe contracture, a custom orthotic will stop it from worsening. Additionally, if your hammer toe is flexible, a hammer toe splint will help straighten the toe. Finally, if your hammer toe caused the formation of corns on top of your toe, a corn pad can be helpful. Padding corns reduces the pressure that caused the toe to form a corn in the first place. A word of caution: avoid medicated corn pads. They contain an acid that can burn healthy skin and make the condition worse. If you are going to use a corn pad, make sure it is non-medicated.

Of course, these non-surgical treatment options work best when a hammer toe is first forming. So, if you notice changes in the shape of your toe, come into the office right away. We can begin treatment immediately to help you avoid surgery!

TAKE A MOMENT TO READ AS A FAMILY

In the midst of a busy school year, it can be hard to find ways to connect as a family. But creating a daily (or weekly) reading routine is a great way to bond while building a life-long love for books! Here's how to start.

1. Set aside a specific time to read.

Whether it's at the breakfast table, just before bed, or right after school, dedicate one time of the day or week when you will read together.



2. Get everyone involved.

Try having everyone in the family read a page out loud to each other, or read to your children, asking them to weigh in on what you've read after each chapter to make the experience more interactive.

3. Or just read side by side.

If everyone prefers to read their own books, settle in together in the same space, and consider discussing what you read at the end of your designated reading hour.

IT'S TIME TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNITY

With flu and norovirus sweeping the nation, it's time to focus on building up your immune system. Luckily, you can do so easily—and naturally—by adding these 10 immune-boosting foods to your diet:

1. Berries.
2. Fish oil.
3. Leafy greens.
4. Nuts and seeds.
5. Spices, especially garlic, ginger and turmeric.
6. Citrus fruits.
7. Poultry.
8. Brightly colored vegetables.
9. Yogurt.
10. Olive oil.



NOW IS THE RIGHT TIME TO QUIT

Even if you've smoked for years, it's not too late to enjoy the health benefits of quitting. In fact, within six hours of quitting, your heart rate slows down and your blood pressure stabilizes. Within one day, nicotine will be almost completely clear of your bloodstream; carbon monoxide levels in your blood will have dropped; and oxygen will have an easier time reaching your heart and muscles. Within a week, you may notice improvements in your sense of taste and smell.

Go three months without taking a puff, chew or vape? Now, you'll be coughing and wheezing less, your immune function and circulation to your hands and feet will be improving, and your lungs will be getting better at removing mucus, tar and dust. Within six months, your stress levels should have dropped, and you'll be less likely to cough up phlegm. After one year, your lungs will be healthier and breathing will be easier than if you'd kept smoking.



10 SMOKING-RELATED DISEASES TO HELP FUEL YOUR QUIT

Need even more reasons to quit smoking? Here are 10 diseases that have been linked to this dangerous habit. By quitting, you immediately reduce your risk for each one!

1. Cancer
2. Heart disease
3. Stroke
4. Lung disease
5. Diabetes
6. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
7. Emphysema
8. Chronic bronchitis
9. Tuberculosis
10. Rheumatoid arthritis

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH



February has been designated as Black History Month, and to help share in this important time, we want to highlight the achievements of Dr. Mildred Dixon, one of the first black women to practice podiatry in this country. After graduating from the Ohio College of Chiropody in 1944, she became the first full-time Black female podiatrist at the Tuskegee Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital, going on to establish the first podiatric residency in Alabama and to create podiatry clinics at VA hospitals across Alabama. Thank you, Dr. Dixon, for all that you've done to advance podiatric care in this country.

MAKING A TIME SHIFT

It's almost time to Spring Forward with yet another time change. Want to help your body adjust better? Here's an easy trick: in the week leading up to the time change, the American Academy of Sleep Medicine suggests gradually adjusting your schedule by heading to bed around 15-20 minutes earlier each day. At the same time, you can gradually adjust forward the timing of other daily activities, including meals and workouts. By spreading these changes out over the course of a week, instead of suddenly and overnight, you can help your body adjust more naturally to the shift, helping avoid negative impacts on your sleep and general health.



THANK YOU!

We sincerely thank you for your generosity and support in helping our office collect socks for Star of Hope. Your kindness and willingness to give have made a meaningful impact, providing warmth and comfort to individuals in our community. Because of your donations, we were able to contribute to this important cause and make a real difference. We are grateful to have such compassionate patients who go above and beyond to help others. Thank you for being a part of this effort and for spreading kindness!



FROM THE DESK OF DR. ANDREW SCHNEIDER

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tanglewoodfootspecialists.com
713-785-7881

