

About L. David Richer, DPM



A native of the Bay Area, California, Dr. Richer pursued his medical education and training on the East Coast, attending Temple University School of

Podiatric Medicine in Philadelphia followed by a 3-year residency in foot and ankle surgery in New York City and Washington, D.C.

Dr. Richer relocated to Arizona in 2001 after his training and joined group practice. In 2006 he left the group and founded the Foot, Ankle & Leg Center in Scottsdale where he offers the latest medical and surgical care to patients of all ages.

At the Foot, Ankle & Leg Center our mission is to provide high quality, effective medical and surgical care. We do so in a comfortable, relaxed setting where we treat patients like family. We strive to eliminate your pain and get you back on your feet as quickly as possible so you can enjoy your favorite activities and sports. We empower our patients with the most up to date information needed to make the right decision for their own care. We utilize the least invasive methods, when possible, to fix the problem. If you have been suffering with Foot, Ankle or Leg pain, we can help!

We welcome you to the Foot, Ankle & Leg Center family.

New Year's Resolutions:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Consider This New Year's Resolution

Make "Take better care of my feet" one of your New Year's resolutions — and then stick to it. After all, the 26 bones, 30 joints, and over 100 muscles, ligaments, and tendons in each foot all coordinate to provide support, balance, and mobility. Help your feet in 2021:

- If you regularly wear athletic shoes, buy new ones every six months (or sooner if necessary). Proper support and cushioning for your feet diminishes over time, which can affect the alignment of your feet and heighten your risk of injury.
- Keep an eye on your socks, too. Don't wear them till they've worn through. Purchase socks made of moisture-wicking materials, such as merino wool, polyester, or blends. Avoid cotton socks, which trap moisture against the skin, raising the risk of blisters, athlete's foot, and, for diabetic patients, ulcers.
- Cut back on your sugar and trans-fat intake to reduce inflammation throughout the body, including your feet.
- Wash your feet each night before going to bed and utilize a moisturizer. (Diabetics should not put moisturizer between the toes.)
- Limit your use of flip-flops and high heels. Flip-flops are unsupportive and leave feet vulnerable to injury and infection. High heels contort feet and grease the skids for bunions, corns, and calluses, among other conditions.
- When buying new shoes, have your feet measured. There is a direct correlation between foot problems and shoes that don't fit correctly.
- Exercise. Walking is a simple exercise that does wonders for foot health.
- If your feet bother you on a regular basis, schedule an appointment at our office. Foot or ankle pain is never normal. The sooner it's addressed, the easier the solution.



Wintry Conditions Can Be Perilous for Ankles

When wintry conditions impose upon walking surfaces, the risk of ankle sprains and fractures soars. These injuries frequently accompany icy tumbles because ice accelerates a fall, and feet can go flying in any direction, which increases the trauma inflicted upon ankles.

Some people make the mistake of assuming they don't have a bad sprain or fracture if they can put weight on the ankle and resume walking after injuring it. That's frequently not the case. Doing so only makes the problem worse, and a person makes himself more vulnerable to chronic instability, joint pain, and arthritis down the road.

In some circumstances, a bad ankle sprain and fracture come as a package deal, with the sprain masking the fracture. The longer a fracture goes untreated (not to mention the ankle sprain), the more complicated the injury will become.

If you fall and suffer an ankle injury, give our office a call for a proper diagnosis and treatment, or head to the ER or an urgent-care center if circumstances dictate. Until you can see someone, apply the RICE technique: Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation.

If you must head out into snowy, icy conditions, lower your chances of a fall:

- Wear shoes or boots with no heels and which have large treads. Rubber soles are best; plastic and leather are more slippery.
- Walk with short, shuffling steps across slick surfaces. Keep your knees bent a bit, and lean forward slightly.
- Don't carry anything that can obstruct your view or throw off your balance.
- Keep your sidewalks, driveways, and steps clear, and make sure you have proper outdoor lighting when out and about.

Mark Your Calendars

- Jan. 3** Festival of Sleep Day: The mattress dates back 77,000 years (grass and leaves ... still counts, though).
- Jan. 4** Trivia Day: Alaska is the only state that can be typed on one row of keys.
- Jan. 10** Houseplant Appreciation Day: They boost one's mood and eliminate airborne toxins!
- Jan. 12** National Hot Tea Day: In 1773, tea brought things to a boil in Boston.
- Jan. 17** Ditch New Year's Resolutions Day: Most of us did this a couple of weeks ago.
- Jan. 18** Thesaurus Day: May you have a stupendous, magnificent, fabulous, splendid day!
- Jan. 29** National Corn Chip Day: Fritos' inventor, Charles Elmer Doolin, didn't eat his creation.





Winter's SAD State of Affairs

Short days, cold temperatures, and a lack of outdoor activity and socializing can dampen one's mood. But for roughly 10 million Americans, it's more intense than just "the winter blues." They have seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

SAD is a treatable form of depression that typically coincides with winter. Symptoms include fatigue, difficulty concentrating, diminished interest in favorite activities, and sometimes overwhelming feelings of helplessness or anxiety.

The lack of natural sunlight over winter can precipitate SAD, wreaking havoc with the body's internal clock and sleep-wake cycles. In turn, this disrupts the balance of neurotransmitter levels in the body. Neurotransmitters are chemical messengers that regulate bodily functions such as sleep, memory, metabolism, and emotional well-being. Studies have shown that the number of SAD cases increases the farther a location is from the equator.

In addition, humans may have evolved to be less active over the winter to save energy (kind of like a hibernating bear). Failure to modify our work and sleep habits from summer to winter fights against this instinct and may result in SAD.

SAD can be something else we blame our parents for, too, as it runs in families. Women are affected by it more than men, especially throughout their reproductive years.

If you believe you may be experiencing SAD — persistent symptoms for two weeks or more — contact your physician for guidance. Don't try to "ride it out" for the winter when you could be feeling better now.

One treatment for SAD is light therapy, which involves a light fixture that emits simulated sunlight; a daily 20- to 30-minute session can help boost your spirit. Braving the daytime elements to soak in some natural sunshine, vitamin D supplements, cognitive behavioral therapy, and medication may be beneficial as well.

Braised Pork in Sweet Soy Sauce

Serves: 4; prep: 10 min.; cook: 30 min.; total: 40 min.

Tender pieces of pork braised in a flavorful sauce with a touch of heat. This is a fabulously easy-to-make takeout fake-out dinner. Pork owns New Year's Day ... it's pretty good the rest of the year, too.

Ingredients

- 3.75-quart braiser
- Glass mixing bowl set (3 piece)

Ingredients

- 2 lb. pork loin
- 2 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp. garlic and ginger paste
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. sesame oil
- 1/2 cup soy sauce (NOTE: There are plenty of low-sodium substitutes on the internet.)
- 4 tbsp. sugar
- 1-1/2 cups water
- 1 tbsp. chili garlic sauce

Garnish

- 2 green onions, chopped (optional)

Instructions

1. Cut the pork in about 1-inch pieces. Sauté in a pan with the vegetable oil for about 3 minutes over medium-high heat until the pork is no longer pink and starts to brown.
2. In a medium bowl, mix the rest of the ingredients. Pour over the pork and bring to a boil. You may think there's too much water, but it will reduce. Once it's boiling, turn the heat down to low and let simmer for about 30 minutes uncovered, stirring occasionally, or until there's only about 3 tbsp. of sauce left.
3. Garnish with green onions. Serve over noodles or steamed rice.

(Recipe courtesy of Joanna Cismaru, www.jocooks.com.)



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The Source of Your Back Pain Might Be Your Feet!

Your feet are the foundation of your body. If something is amiss, other areas of your body sometimes suffer the consequences — or at least share them.

For example, a person experiencing foot pain may limp, hobble, walk on the outside of their foot, or tiptoe — sometimes ever so subtly — to alleviate discomfort. However, when a person's walking pattern (gait) changes, it places undue stress on the next link in the chain, the ankle joint, and the buck might be passed to the knee, to the hip, or ultimately to the lower back.

Over an extended period of time, abnormal gait can cause joint cartilage to wear excessively, place added stress on ligaments and tendons, and eventually result in arthritis.

Flat feet and high arches are two examples of foot conditions that can contribute to back pain. People with flat feet have fallen arches that can cause misalignment with the ankles and force legs to rotate inward and the pelvis to tilt forward, increasing stress in the lower back.

Those with high arches have feet that don't absorb shock as well as they should. Energy not absorbed by the feet will impact another joint down the line, one not as equipped to handle it. Discomfort, pain, or injury may follow.

Wearing high heels every day or shoes that are too tight or unsupportive also render feet more vulnerable to pain and foot deformities, altering one's gait.

If you have unexplained back pain, contact our office. Unattended foot pain, foot deformities, and unsupportive shoes aren't just problems for your feet; they can also spell bad news elsewhere in your body.