



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.



The Christmas Tree Blues

One unfortunate step onto a shard of wood, metal, plastic, or glass may result in a foot splinter. This time of year, Christmas tree pine needles and bits of broken ornaments join the usual list of splinter suspects.

Splinters need to be dealt with promptly to avoid infection and pain that will only intensify if ignored. Bacteria on the splinter material is the chief culprit for infection. Also, when splinter removal is delayed, the greater the chance the splinter burrows deeper and becomes trickier to remove.

Many shallow splinters can be removed at home. If doing so, the following steps are advised:

- First, clean your hands with warm, soapy water; then do the same at the area where the splinter is lodged.
- Disinfect a needle and/or tweezers with rubbing alcohol, iodine, or boiling water, then allow them to dry and cool.
- If the splinter is already partially exposed, use the tweezers to gently pull it out. Otherwise, soak your foot in warm water for 10 minutes to soften the skin.
- To begin extraction, squeeze the skin on both sides of the splinter. The pressure alone may force out the splinter, or the splinter may partially emerge to be tweezered.
- If the squeeze/pinch doesn't coax the splinter at least partway out, the needle can be gently slid beneath the splinter to push it to the surface. Then tweezers it.
- After the splinter is removed, wash the exit point with soap and water, then apply antibiotic ointment.

Caution: If you have diabetic peripheral neuropathy or circulatory issues, **never** attempt to remove an embedded splinter at home. "Digging" for a splinter may cause a wound that worsens (possibly undetected) and leads to an ulcer and infection. Promptly schedule an appointment at our office for safe, immediate relief.



Toenail Fungus: *Plan Ahead!*

Toenail fungus (onychomycosis) is a frustrating, embarrassing problem that approximately 10%–15% of Americans deal with; older adults, 50%.

Fungi thrive in warm, moist locations and can be spread easily at places such as nail salons, gyms, pools, and public showers. The insides of shoes and boots can be quite accommodating as well.

In addition, minor trauma and irritations of a toenail can create tiny openings that enable opportunistic fungi to gain a foothold. Older people's toenails are drier and more brittle, which increases their vulnerability. Fungus-affected nails may become brittle, thickened, warped, or discolored and might emit a foul odor.

Winter is the best time to attack fungal nails if you want to confidently display your feet this summer. Treatments aren't a once-and-done, everything-is-immediately-rosy deal. They can take anywhere from several weeks to several months. And, although the fungus may have been defeated, the destruction to the nail will remain until the nail grows out, which can be six months or more.

Fungal toenails require podiatric care. Hiding nails under polish won't make the problem go away. Over-the-counter remedies are often useless. An advanced infection can cause the nail to separate from the nail bed, prompting irritation, pain, and potential removal.

Treatments for fungal toenails include prescription topical ointments or polishes, oral medications, antifungal foot soaks, and laser therapy. Laser therapy is the most effective treatment. It typically requires two to four painless treatment sessions spanning two months, with each session taking 30 minutes or less per foot.

If you are dealing with fungal toenails, the time to act is now. Schedule an appointment with our office and start dreaming about summer.

Mark Your Calendars

- Dec. 7** Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day: 1,606 of the 2,026 sailors and marines who perished were aboard either the *Arizona* or *Oklahoma*.
- Dec. 7** Letter Writing Day: George H. W. Bush mangled a verbal expression or two but was known as a prolific and elegant letter writer.
- Dec. 13** Violin Day: A violin and a fiddle are the same thing. Just ask Sarah Chang or Alison Krauss.
- Dec. 21** Winter solstice: Meteorologists use meteorological seasons. In their world, winter begins on Dec. 1.
- Dec. 25** Christmas: Thank Coca-Cola for making Santa plump, jolly, and adorned in red (matched their logo).
- Dec. 25** Hanukkah (sunset): The fifth time since 1900 that Hanukkah has begun on Christmas evening.
- Dec. 31** New Year's Eve Day: It's not the last day of the year ... it's the first day of the rest of your life!



Platelet-Rich Plasma:

An Advanced Treatment for Foot and Ankle Conditions

Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy has emerged as a groundbreaking treatment option for various foot and ankle conditions, offering patients a natural alternative to treat chronic conditions and to avoid surgery. This innovative approach harnesses the body's own healing mechanisms to accelerate recovery and provide long-lasting relief.

What is PRP?

PRP is derived from the patient's own blood, which is processed to concentrate platelets and growth factors. These concentrated healing components are then precisely injected into the injured area, stimulating tissue repair and regeneration.

Key Benefits for Foot and Ankle Conditions

Accelerated Healing – PRP significantly speeds up the natural healing process by delivering a high concentration of growth factors directly to the injured area. This is particularly effective for chronic conditions that haven't responded to conventional treatments.

Reduced Inflammation – The anti-inflammatory properties of PRP help decrease pain and swelling, making it especially beneficial for conditions like plantar fasciitis, and Achilles tendinitis.

Versatile Applications – PRP effectively treats numerous foot and ankle conditions, including:

- Chronic tendon injuries
- Ligament sprains and tears
- Arthritis
- Chronic wounds or ulcers
- Sports-related injuries



Treatment Process and Recovery

The procedure takes approximately 30 minutes and involves:

1. Drawing blood from the patient
2. Processing the blood to concentrate platelets
3. Precise injection into the affected area

Most patients return to light exercise after a couple of days, with strenuous activities reintroduced after a couple of weeks. The full benefits may develop over several weeks as healing progresses and tissue regenerates.

Long-term Outcomes

Clinical studies have shown that PRP therapy can provide lasting relief for many foot and ankle conditions. Patients often experience:

- Decreased pain levels
- Improved mobility
- Enhanced function
- Reduced need for surgery
- Better quality of life

PRP and MLS Laser Therapy: Turbocharge Healing!

PRP therapy, combined with the MLS laser, significantly speeds up the healing and tissue regeneration process. PRP provides the growth factors necessary for tissue repair and regeneration while MLS laser therapy uses light energy to increase blood flow, decrease pain, reduce swelling and speed up tissue repair. This is a very effective way to quickly heal injured tissue. If you have been suffering from chronic pain or an injury, schedule an appointment today to see if these advanced treatments can help you live your best life, pain free.



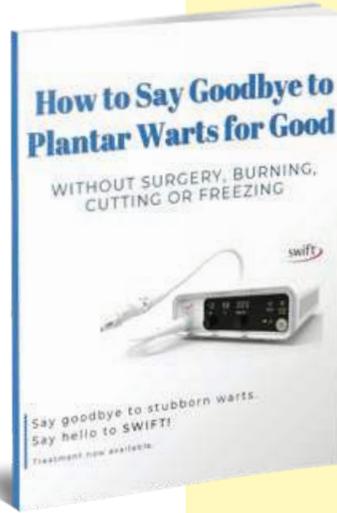
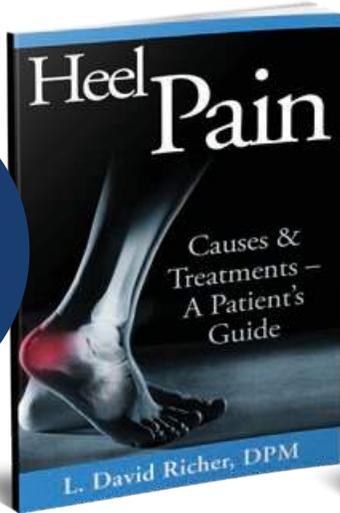


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Don't Let Your Orthotic Benefits Expire!

If you have foot or ankle pain, this is often caused by a misalignment of the foot and ankle. This is often treated with a custom foot orthotic, a prescription device to realign the foot and reduce stress on joints, muscles, tendons, ligaments and nerves. Many patients have orthotic benefits and may be allowed one or more pairs per year. You may have already met your deductible and are entitled to orthotic benefits with little or no cost. We now use advanced laser scanning, computerized gait analysis and 3D printing, resulting in a very lightweight, comfortable orthotic to use in your shoes. **Call us now for a complimentary orthotic benefits check and see if you can get a pair before the end of the year.**

Inching Up to the Holidays

With the holiday season upon us, many women gear up for festive social occasions with high heels. High heels add a touch of visual elegance, style, and height(!) to any event, but they also contribute a heap of uncertainty to foot and ankle health.

For those who wear high heels only for special occasions for just a few hours, good for you. High heels should not be worn regularly or for long stretches of time. For starters, high heels force most of the wearer's body weight onto the balls of the feet, potentially resulting in a Morton's neuroma, with discomfort fanning out to the toes. The shift in weight distribution leads to instability, an unsteady gait, and possible falls, ankle sprains, etc. — so much for elegance.

Habitual wearers may experience a shortened Achilles tendon and calf muscles. Taking normal, longer strides becomes a challenge, and tendonitis may introduce itself. There's nothing festive about discomfort with every step.

Narrow, pointed high heels scrunch the toes into the toe box, making conditions ripe for hammertoes, blisters, and calluses. A frequent wearer already predisposed to developing a bunion will find that process greatly accelerated too.

High heels can subject the plantar fascia to excessive pressure as well. Anyone who has dealt with plantar fasciitis generally won't recommend putting it on one's bucket list.

Keep in mind that no part of the body is an island unto itself. High-heel issues affecting the feet and ankles can extend their misery to the knees and lower back.

Enjoy everything the holiday season has to offer but be mindful of your feet and ankles. If you experience persistent discomfort, contact our office for a thorough evaluation, proper diagnosis, and effective treatment.

