

SANDAL SEASON AHEAD; TIME TO FIX YOUR FEET!

Unsightly Deformities Can Be Repaired with Routine Surgery

If unsightly foot problems, such as bunions, hammertoes and nail fungus, prevent you from exposing your feet on the beach or in stylish sandals this summer, there are remedies available that will have your feet looking and feeling better before the warm weather comes.

“Many women with common structural foot problems are embarrassed about exposing their feet,” said James Good, a podiatric foot and ankle surgeon. “As a result, they are deprived of a comfortable pleasure of summer.”

Dr. Good, who is a member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, has found that bunions are the most common deformity for which women seek surgical treatment, both for improved mobility and comfort while wearing shoes and for a better appearance when barefoot or wearing sandals. A bunion can be repaired with a short post-operative recovery period, depending on the extent of the problem.

Women are more frequently affected from wearing tight and pointed shoes that aggravate the condition. Seniors also are vulnerable because of their higher incidence of arthritis affecting the big toe joint.

Surgery may be performed at a hospital, surgical center or properly equipped office operating room, often using local anesthesia. The majority of bunions are corrected by realigning the bones of the joint and repositioning the surrounding muscles, tendons and ligaments.

Unsightly hammertoes also can be a source of embarrassment, but they can be corrected in time for summer, according to Dr. Chris Guerrieri. “Hammertoes are flexible or rigid, and may occur on any of the lesser toes. Ligaments and tendons that have tightened cause joints to buckle and cock the toe upward,” he said. “Depending on the number of toes involved, the recovery time from hammertoe surgery might be several weeks.”

Nail fungus is another common problem that can make feet unattractive. The dark, moist surroundings created by shoes and stockings make the feet susceptible to fungal infection.

A fungus may cause the nail to thicken and become yellow or brownish. Oral and topical medications sometimes eliminate a fungus, but it can return if the medication is discontinued. Curing a fungal infection can be difficult and sometimes requires permanent removal of the nail.

For a foot and ankle consultation in the Gladstone or Liberty office, contact Northland Podiatry at 816.453.5161. Most insurances and Medicare accepted. Evening hours are available.