



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Foot & Ankle
SPECIALISTS

Footprints

News and Updates *Nov/Dec 2015 | Jan 2016*



El Niño!?!?

Is it really coming?

About the Doctors



Drs. Nitza N. Rodriguez and Robert J. Spencer are experienced, highly-trained, compassionate foot & ankle specialists who treat all conditions of the foot and ankle in infants, children and adults. Dr. Spencer has a special interest in trauma, sports related injuries, and reconstruction of the foot and ankle. Dr. Rodriguez is fluent in English and Spanish and has additional training and experience in lower extremity pediatric deformities including clubfoot. Learn more about the doctors at www.socalfootandankle.com.



If you live in California, there is no doubt that you know we are in a drought and have probably heard that they are predicting El Niño this winter. If El Niño hits—it 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 fungus 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. Try to wear moisture-wicking socks. As soon as possible, get out of your wet shoes and socks and dry your feet thoroughly not forgetting in between your toes. 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 whether El Niño comes or not!

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If you have not already done so, come check us out online and get social with us.



Don't Let Your Leftovers Go to Waste!

Use this guide to store and keep food fresh



Dinner's done and you're as stuffed as your turkey, but now what do you do with all the leftovers? Follow these guidelines to ensure plenty of midnight snacks:

Store leftovers within two hours of cooking to maintain quality and avoid inviting bacteria to the party. Make sure it is cooled before storing and that it's placed in a well-sealed container.

Fridge & Freezer Facts:	Refrigerated	Frozen
Cooked turkey	lasts 3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Gravy	eat within 1 to 2 days	2 to 3 months
Mashed potatoes	3 days	10 months
Cranberry sauce	stays good 10-14 days	1-2 months
Baked apple or pumpkin pie	fresh for 3 to 4 days	1-2 months

Wait a minute—who are we kidding? There's never any pie left!

Now, let the late night grazing begin. Start making those turkey sandwiches. Go ahead and eat some cranberry sauce for breakfast—we won't tell! Remember, though, if ever in doubt, throw it out.

Rudolph the Red-Toed Reindeer:

How to Avoid Ingrown Toenails



Do you have a toe so red it glows? It could be an ingrown toenail. This painful condition occurs when the edge of your nail grows downward and digs into the flesh of your toe. Ouch! It can get infected, too, and become red, swollen and tender, making it difficult to wear shoes. That can obviously put a real damper on joining any reindeer games! Fortunately, there are things you can do to prevent ingrown toenails (not to mention anyone calling you names!).

Often, this condition is caused by shoes that are too tight and are squeezing your toes. Switch to more comfortable styles with wide toe boxes and plenty of wiggle room. Also, when you trim your toenails, take the time to do it right. Cut straight across—do not follow the curve. Make several small cuts instead of trying to get it all done in one shot. Be careful not to go too short, either. Nails should be even with the tips of your toes. Smooth rough edges with an emery board, and you should be good to go. It's a good idea, though, to check your feet on a regular basis, especially if you have diabetes. That way, you can catch any problems early and get treatment.

Don't be like Rudolph the Red-Toed Reindeer—if you're suffering from an ingrown toenail, our staff will be happy to help. Before you know it, you'll be pain-free and shouting out with glee!

Fun Gifts for Feet

Lots of times, people get sweaters for holiday gifts, or scarves and hats, but what about something for your feet? They hardly get any presents at all (unless you want to count those itchy, wool socks your great Aunt Sophie knitted)! Well, we're here to give feet everywhere some love with fun gift ideas galore.

Keep your toes snugly warm with a cute pair of toe socks (made of cotton, not wool!). Maybe you're into yoga—yoga socks keep feet cozy while still giving you some grip. There are even mop socks especially designed to clean the floor while you walk—perfect for holiday parties! Perhaps you'd prefer some slippers to keep your tootsies toasty, or you'd love to give them a soak in your very own foot bath—who wouldn't? Might we also suggest some luxurious foot creams or butters, and maybe even a homemade foot scrub—it's easy! Just mix 2 parts brown sugar, 1 part coconut oil, 1/2 tsp of Vitamin E, and a dash of vanilla or lavender. It'll keep feet soft and smelling great too. Of course you can always give a gift certificate to a salon for a pedicure or massage, or better yet—both. In addition, foot jewelry, like anklets and toe rings, pretty up those piggies in a snap, and are a foot fan favorite.



So there you have it. Now, you can add some fun gifts for feet to your holiday shopping list and make your whole family happy from their heads to their toes. For more gift ideas, just ask!





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Did you know that SCFAS has:

- A secure Patient Portal – Log onto patient fusion and you can email your doctor
- Make appointments online
- On-site digital x-rays
- SCFAS can treat
 - Clubfoot
 - Infant and children foot and ankle problems
 - Ankle and foot fractures and sprains
 - Sports related injuries
 - Worker's Compensation cases

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Little Footprints Achilles Tendinitis Tips to Keep You in the Game

School sports of all kinds are in full swing, and every athlete wants to finish the season strong. If you or your little one is training too hard, though, it can take its toll, especially on the Achilles Tendon.

Achilles tendinitis is an overuse injury and often occurs in those who increase the duration and intensity of their workouts too quickly. To avoid this sidelining condition, it's best to gradually boost training and be sure to warm up properly beforehand. Stretching the calf muscle is one of the keys to help prevent this problem. (Visit our website and download a handout of stretching exercises under patient information) The right shoes make a difference, too. Make sure yours offer plenty of cushioning and support to reduce tension placed upon the Achilles. Orthotics can provide additional help as well.

Another great prevention method is cross-training. Alternating low-impact activities – like biking and swimming – with your high impact workouts can help minimize stress on the tendon. Strong calf muscles can do so as well, so try strengthening exercises like rising up and down on your toes.

Finally, if you or your child feels pain, rest! Avoid running, especially on hilly terrain, and ice the area to reduce inflammation. A little patience will go a long way here. Going back too early can make the problem worse and even encourage future flare-ups.

Follow these tips and by the time the ref blows the whistle, your child will be more than ready to play! Just ask our friendly staff if you want to find out more.