



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
**Foot & Ankle**  
SPECIALISTS

# Footprints

News and Updates *Feb/Mar/April 2017*



## Happy Healing: Recovering from an Achilles Rupture

An Achilles tendon rupture is a serious injury that typically needs surgery and takes a long time to heal, but a positive attitude can go a long way. So, if you blew out your Achilles tendon playing your favorite sport or from a work related injury, not to worry – it's a long road to recovery, but here are a few ways to look on the bright side and make your healing process happy and stress-free:

### 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](http://www.socalfootandankle.com).



**Take advantage of this time to relax!** Rest is essential for the healing process to take place. Think of it as a mini-vacation from all the chores and to-dos you can now have someone else do for you.

**Do some home remodeling.** It's a great idea to prepare your home prior to your procedure. Set up a comfort zone around your favorite chair with pillows, blankets, books, snacks, a laptop, TV remote, and anything else you might want at your fingertips. Elicit a friend or loved one to stay with you and help. Prepare meals ahead of time and freeze them. Set up your bathroom to make entry and exit easy and bath time less of a bother – perhaps add a stool to rest your foot on and place towels and toiletries in reach. The more prep work you can do beforehand, the easier and less stressful your recovery time will be!

**Enjoy being a passenger.** Let's face it, it's kind of nice having a chauffeur and not having to deal with driving or traffic!

**Catch up on episodes.** If your favorite show is starting season 6 and you're only on season 3, guess what? When you've got a cast on your foot, no one can blame you for binge-watching! You'll be caught up in no time.

**Keep smiling.** It's hard, but try to stay positive, be patient, and keep up with physical therapy and other parts of your recovery plan. You can do this, and remember – we are here to help if you need us!



# The Low Down on Lisfranc Fractures

Perhaps you've heard the term "Lisfranc fracture" in the news referring to the latest athlete being added to the injured reserve list, but what exactly is this injury all about? Well, here's a little background on the not-so-common condition so you can impress your friends with your knowledge next time they come over to watch the big game.

A Lisfranc fracture occurs when a foot is planted but weight is suddenly shifted in another direction – a common phenomenon in many sports! This causes an extreme rotation of the joint connecting your forefoot and midfoot, fracturing the connective bones. The joint is called—you guessed it—the Lisfranc joint, and is named for Jacques Lisfranc de St. Martin who was a surgeon in Napoleon's army known for his skill in amputating soldiers' feet at this particular place. While the injury was first seen when riders fell from their horses with their feet still stuck in the stirrups, clearly, the same type of abnormal twisting can occur in athletes of all kinds.

This midfoot injury is often confused with an ankle sprain because of its similar symptoms of swelling and bruising, so it's important to seek treatment when symptoms arise, especially if discoloration is both on the top and bottom of your foot.

There you have it – all the Lisfranc fracture facts needed to score big with your fans!

## Call it Quits! How Smoking Affects the Feet

It's one of the most common New Year's resolutions there is – to quit smoking – and there are even more reasons than you might think.

Smoking doesn't just harm your heart and lungs – believe it or not, it can do some serious damage to your feet as well! After all, feet are the farthest thing from your heart, so blood takes a long time to reach them as it is. When you smoke, it causes arteries to narrow and circulation to become impaired, which means it's even more difficult for blood to deliver the nutrients your feet need to stay healthy and problem-free.

The result? Nerve damage, injuries that go unnoticed, and wounds that don't heal – all of which opening the door to dangerous complications, including gangrene and amputation.

There are plenty of reasons to quit smoking, and now you can add two more – your feet!

If you need help, we are here for you. Try these tips:

- Write down your reasons to remind yourself why it's so important
- Prepare ahead of time by setting up support and removing ashtrays
- Find a relaxing alternative – maybe yoga or massage
- Avoid triggers like alcohol
- Exercise and eat a healthy diet
- Reward yourself
- Don't give up!

If you need more help, just let us know. You don't have to do it alone.





**5 MONTHS! Yes, 5 months until World Clubfoot Day, California! Planning has started and the date is set: June 10, 2017 at Florence Joyner Olympiad Park in Mission Viejo!**

This year we are excited to introduce everyone to Steve Lyons, one of our honorable guests. We call him our clubfoot warrior! Steve is an incredible individual who has an extensive clubfoot journey full of multiple surgeries, pain and recovery. We believe he is truly an inspiration. Like Tony Spineto, he teaches us that our minds, our thoughts, our desires and intentions are stronger than any physical ability. Join us this June to hear his amazing journey!

Congratulations Steve for completing 7 months of sobriety today!

Perhaps the words of his mother can partially describe some of his journey. Thank you Jill Miller for sharing your story.

"...This is something I have prayed for since his very first surgery at 10 months of age, almost 30 years ago. He was the happiest baby, but honestly he didn't smile for a month, if not more, after the first surgery. With each subsequent surgery, the trauma was cumulative, both physically and emotionally. Because of his gentle and sensitive nature, I knew he would have a very rough road overcoming the trauma and later effects of bullying, and feeling different.

I had learned about the Ponseti method years ago and was already aware of the pitfalls and poor outcomes of surgical treatment. I felt such anguish the first time he was first taken out of my arms for surgery and at the horror of his nonstop screaming after the procedure. He was given Benadryl and Tylenol for pain. I cannot believe what he had to endure. The surgery was so terribly invasive, and to this day thinking about this brings me to tears. I couldn't believe what was done to his precious feet. I did seek alternatives to additional surgical treatment and drove him across the country looking for less invasive options. I did my best and know I am not to blame for the outcome, but as his mother and as a physician, it has been so unbelievably painful to feel so helpless with addressing his physical needs.

Bearing witness to his inner strife and struggle with addiction over the last decade with tough love has been the biggest challenge of my life. To see him now, has brought such happiness. I am eternally grateful for your kindness and support, and I'm so proud of my son for embracing his recovery."





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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

# You've Heard of Pigeon Toes, but Penguin-Toed? Understanding Out-Toeing



Pigeons are known for walking with their feet angled toward each other which is why the familiar term pigeon-toed is used to describe those who walk with toes pointed inward. While not as common, children sometimes walk more like a penguin – with toes pointing outward – a condition called, curiously enough, out-toeing.

Parents often get their feathers ruffled, understandably concerned with such gait abnormalities, however in most cases, out-toeing is painless, does not interfere with activities, and children simply outgrow the condition and their gait corrects itself far before they leave the nest (typically, by age 10)!

Occasionally, though, your child may experience discomfort and have difficulty running and playing. Even if kids don't make a peep, signs of trouble are easy to spot. Limping, tripping, and falling are clues that something is wrong, along with excessive wear on the outside of shoes, a reduced range of motion, and lack of desire to participate in normal activities.

If you notice any of these symptoms, come see us so we can rule out any underlying conditions that could be affecting your child's gait. We will take your little one under our wing and provide the best of care!