



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
**Foot & Ankle**  
SPECIALISTS

# Footprints

News and Updates *May/June/July 2016*

## Join us for....



Want to have fun and meet new people, do something worthwhile, and learn something new all at the same time? Then this clubfoot fundraising event is right up your alley! Here's what's happening in Mission Viejo, CA in honor of World Clubfoot Day (which is celebrated around the world on June 3):

- On Saturday, June 4, 2016, clubfoot families will have a chance to meet, connect, and support each other from 10 AM until 1:30 PM at Florence Joyner Olympiad Park (22760 Olympiad Rd). While the parents get to know one another, fun games and activities will be provided for the children.
- You'll have a chance to support Miraclefeet, an organization that works to provide clubfoot treatment to children in underdeveloped countries around the world. There are several ways to support them: you can donate items to be raffled off at the event, buy lots of raffle tickets for your chance to get your favorite item, or simply make a cash donation.
- You can learn more about this birth defect from motivational speakers Tony Spineto, a clubfoot triathlete, Jill Harold, a clubfoot mother and clubfoot awareness advocate, and our own Dr. Nitza Rodriguez, who treats children with clubfoot at Southern California Foot & Ankle Specialists.

This is a topic and subject that is near and dear to our hearts, and our goal is to help as many children as possible by correcting their birth defect so they can run and play as other children do without crooked, painful feet. The wonderful thing is that this can usually be done with simple manipulation and casting of the feet and legs and a minor tendon lengthening.

Help us support this wonderful cause by coming out with your family on June 4 and being part of this event. To find out how to donate items, simply call our office at (949) 364-9255 (WALK). That is also the number to call if you are concerned about your child's foot development. We love helping to fix children's feet so they can enjoy all the fun of childhood without pain and limitation!

### 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).



### Help a child walk

- \$ 20 – Supply a clubfoot brace for one child.
- \$ 50 – Provide a brace and casting materials for one child.
- \$ 100 – Provide casting, braces & transportation for the family.
- \$ 250 – Provide complete Ponseti treatment for one child.
- \$ 1000 – Support the treatment of four children.



# Break out the Barbeque!

In honor of National Barbecue Month, here are some BBQ tips, hot off the grill:

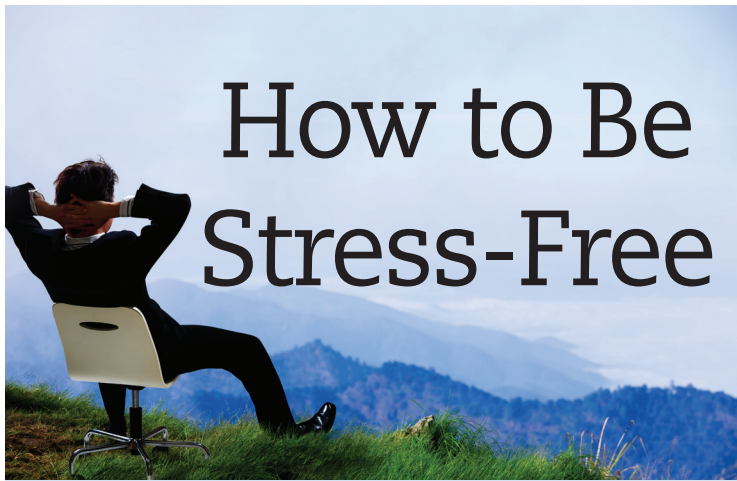
- For moist meat, marinate first, or place a heat-safe pan of water on the grill with it.
- Making kabobs? Parboil carrots and potatoes first since they take longer to cook than other ingredients. BONUS TIP: soak wooden skewers in water before using them so they don't burn.
- Spray some cooking oil on the grill prior to putting the food on to keep it from sticking.
- If you're using charcoal, wait until it turns white before beginning to cook.
- If you can't find your meat thermometer, here's a cool trick: use your right index finger to press on the fleshy area at the base of your left thumb and compare that to how the meat feels.  
**Rare:** meat feels how this flesh feels when fingers are extended but relaxed  
**Medium:** how it feels when fingers are extended but spread apart  
**Well-done:** how it feels with fingers in a fist



Now get out there and start grillin'!

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## How to Be Stress-Free



April was stress awareness month! A whole month dedicated to it! For those of you who are all too aware of how stressed you are, now you can rest easy with these top tips for living a stress-free life:

(We know how foot and ankle pain or injury can cause stress)

**Skirt the source.** Figure out what exactly stresses you out, then avoid it if at all possible.

**Let go of what you can't control.** You may not be able to change a stressful situation, but you can control how you deal with it. The popular mantra, "Stay calm and carry on" is

applicable here. Take some deep breaths, count to ten, repeat the mantra—whatever helps to calm yourself so you can get through the problem without getting anxious about it.

**Smile!** Simply having a positive attitude can shoo stress away.

**Take care of yourself.** Getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, and exercising regularly makes a big difference. That yoga class is calling your name!

**Depressurize.** Many times we place stress upon ourselves by trying to accomplish too much in too little time. Be realistic about what you can accomplish and manage your time accordingly. Remember, it's okay to take a break now and again, ask for help, and allow yourself to say "No" sometimes.

We hope this helps you relax and enjoy a stress-free day. If you'd like any more tips (foot massage, anyone?), ask our friendly staff—they'll be glad to share some happiness!





# Don't Skip These Spring Training Tips

We've got news for you: the off-season is over. Time to pull on the shorts, strap on the shoes and get out there and start training. Whether you want to run a 5k, be the best pitcher on your co-ed softball team, or test yourself in a triathlon, here's a little tip: start slow!

Many of us jump into a training routine with full force, anxious to get in shape and achieve our goals, but doing too much too soon can actually sideline your dreams. In order to avoid injury, it's essential that you gradually build the intensity and duration of your workouts, so your muscles are able to slowly adjust and you don't place too much stress on your bones.

It's also a good idea to cross-train—incorporating low impact activities decreases your risk of overuse issues. You should always warm up prior to activity, too, even if you just do a little walking or a few jumping jacks. In the same way, make sure to cool down with some stretches afterward.

If you do start noticing aches and pains, remember: resting a little now could save you from having to completely throw in the towel later. For more tips, feel free to ask our helpful staff. Let the training begin!

## Are You Wearing the Right Shoe for What You Do?



If you're going on a hike, wearing ballet slippers would probably be a bad idea, as would attempting to dance in hiking boots. High heels would certainly not be the best choice to wear when going for a run. Conversely, regular running shoes would not do you much good on the basketball court or artificial turf (although they'd sure beat flip flops!).

What we're trying to say is, the right shoe matters. It's highly important to make sure you are wearing the appropriate footwear for the activity you're in, not just to ensure comfort and enjoyment, but more important, to avoid injuries.

For instance, if you don't have the ankle support of a good basketball shoe, you are at risk of a serious sprain. Turf sports typically need shoes with cleats to give you good traction. If you're on your feet all day at work, excellent cushioning is a must.

So, whatever you do, look or ask for shoes specifically made for the activity in which you're participating. Make sure they offer all the characteristics you might need—a sturdy sole, supportive arch, breathable material, spacious toe box, ankle protection, cleats—whatever your sport or activity requires. Try the shoes on with the socks you plan on wearing, too, and be sure to get a proper fit. Remember to replace your shoes often as they will break down and can lack support which can lead to pain and/or injury.

You know what they say: If the shoe fits, wear it. (But only if it's the right shoe for what you do!)



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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

# Calming Concerns about Intoeing

Pigeons coo just like babies do, but as a parent, you hope the similarities stop there! Sometimes, however, children's feet do turn inward instead of pointing straight ahead, a condition known as intoeing, a.k.a. "pigeon toes." If this is the case with your child, rest assured it is common as all that cooing going on! (Not to mention those diaper changes!)

Thought to be a result of the child's position in the womb or a twisting of the shin or femur bones, in the majority of cases, intoeing almost always corrects itself with age. In other words, your child will most likely be walking just fine before he or she flies the coop.

Of course, if the situation doesn't seem to be going away or if it is causing your child difficulties walking and running and doing all of the things kids love to do, there are different causes of intoeing and various treatment options available.

Your best bet, though, is to have us assess your child's gait and determine what type of treatment, if any, is appropriate. The bottom line? If your child is pigeon-toed, there's no need to panic. Running out of diapers, on the other hand, is a different story