



Happy Holidays from SCFAS!

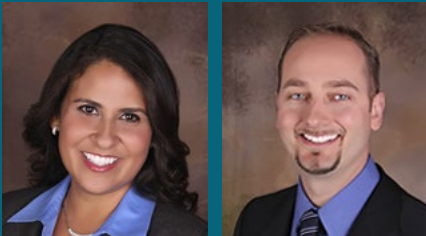
Hello All,

We can't believe it is that time of the year already! Wanting to thank you and wish you all a lovely and peaceful holiday season. We are all so blessed to have you in our lives. You and your children and families truly bring so much joy to our office. This year has been a really great one and we continue to grow. We have some patients that travel quite a distance to see us and we appreciate it. We know having foot or ankle issues is not easy and can be challenging but we believe it can make us appreciate things better as well. We are often times incredibly humbled by the courage and resilience of many of our patients.

We wish you all a joyous holiday season. We would like to thank those of you who have taken the time to thank our staff for their amazing service. We are so appreciative of them and are fortunate to have them be part of the SCFAS family. We truly could not do what we do without our amazing team, Karen, Tiffany, and Jerry.

Warm regards always,
Drs. Spencer and Rodriguez

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.



Things that Go Bump on Your Foot



When you're a doctor of any kind, you just come to expect someone asking you what a strange lump is somewhere.

And we're glad patients do! Keeping an eye on your body is an essential part of discovering problems and addressing them before they become more serious. It's always better to check something out and have it be nothing to worry about than to overlook something that is!

So, if you find a mystery lump on your foot (we're talking something whose identity isn't pretty obvious, like a bunion), what could it be?

The most common cause of a bump or lump appearing on the foot is a ganglionic cyst. This is a small, soft, fluid-filled sac that forms near a joint or tendon. It's most commonly found on the top or side of the foot, or close to the ankle joint.

While a ganglionic cyst is not cancerous, it will usually not go away on its own and must be drained. Even then, the fluid within the cyst can refill if the entire thing is not surgically removed.

Unfortunately, there is always the possibility that a lump can be cancerous. If there is reason to suspect something might be malignant, we may recommend a biopsy and other tests to help determine what exactly we are dealing with.

If you have a lump on your foot that has not gone away after a few days, it is always best to have it examined sooner than later. Not only will addressing the problem sooner often lead to more effective treatment but having the peace of mind of knowing what something is or is not can be very powerful to your emotional health.

Never be shy if you want us to look at something. We always want you to speak up!

Mark Your Calendars

- December 1** National Eat a Red Apple Day – We recommend a Fuji or Jazz.
- December 4** National Trick Shot Day – Created by the Harlem Globetrotters!
- December 8** Pretend to Be a Time Traveler Day – WE GOTTA GO BACK, MARTY!
- December 12** Gingerbread House Day – Bring out your confectionary architect.
- December 17** National Maple Syrup Day – Check out our recipe for Maple Cranberry Sauce!
- December 18** Answer the Phone Like Buddy the Elf Day – “[Your Name] the Elf. What’s your favorite color?”
- December 21** Crossword Puzzle Day – Line up those letters.
- December 30** Bacon Day – As if you really need a day designated for this.



Getting Back into Exercise? Do It Right!

There's almost never a reason *not* to start exercising, no matter how long it's been since you've focused on your physical activity. The benefits—both physical and mental—can be highly rewarding.

But like most anything, there are better and worse ways to get back into an exercise routine and doing things the wrong way can lead to disappointment or, worse, injury.

Here are some tips for picking up your fitness regimen again:

- **Talk to Your Doctor First** – You might have seen this one coming, but it's still important! Let your physician know what you plan to do and what your goals are. They can let you know of any concerns they might have, and even provide some tips on how to increase your effectiveness!
- **Start Simple** – You may have done a lot previously, but your body simply isn't ready to go back to that level yet. Don't feel ashamed to start with light walks or jogs, just to get your body moving again.
- **Build Up Slowly** – As you gain strength and endurance, don't jump the gun on increasing your workout load. A good increase should never be greater than 10% each week. Any more than that increases your risk of overuse injuries such as stress fractures and tendonitis.
- **Take Someone Along** – Having a workout buddy will help you remain accountable to your recommitment, not to mention provide more fun, support, and a watchful eye.

Remember: Fitness is more about the journey than the destination. Enjoy how good it makes you feel in the interim, and don't get impatient to see the results you want!



Morning Heel Pain? It May Be Plantar Fasciitis

We get that there are some days you have reasons not to want to get out of bed in the morning (and hopefully not often!). If heel pain is one of those reasons, however, we need to talk.

A shooting, stabbing pain in the heels when your feet hit the floor in the morning is a common condition. There may be several reasons why this happens, but among the most likely of them is a condition known as plantar fasciitis.

The plantar fascia is a thick band of tissue that runs from the base of the toes to the heel bone. It provides shape and support when you walk.

If the plantar fasciia is exposed to too much stress and tension, such as from running without enough preparation or standing in one spot all day at a job, it can develop small tears and become inflamed.

So why does the pain happen in the morning? When the plantar fasciia is at rest, it can grow more rigid. The pain of the inflammation or irritation grows more intense when starting to use that area of your foot again but will gradually decrease as the plantar fascia "warms up" and grows more flexible.

Do not let plantar fasciitis keep you from enjoying your mornings. Whether you are suffering from this condition or another form of heel pain, we have treatments that can help!



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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

Don't Stress Over Stress Fractures

The term "stress fracture" is enough to cause some anxiety, and its painful effects on your activities is surely not relaxing, either.

But if you're going to recover from these tiny cracks along the surface of a bone, you'll need to relax.

As the name implies, a stress fracture is usually caused by too much force being placed on the foot or ankle. This tends to be the result of either increasing the intensity of an activity beyond what the body is currently able to handle, or repetitive stress that has not allowed the body proper time to recover.

Our bones are fantastic structures that are capable of building themselves back and stronger than before, but keep the pressure up without giving yourself enough time for your body to heal and a stress fracture can happen!

Recovering from a stress fracture means letting your body catch up on its repairs and then some. Yes, that will likely mean reducing or postponing the activities you love. The alternative, however, can be worse. Continuing to pressure a stress fracture may make it worse and lead to long-term pain and injury.

So, if a stress fracture or other cause of pain has cropped up during your activities, let us know. We can help you not only get back to moving faster, but help you find the best ways to prevent such injuries from happening again!

