



April 2022 Newsletter

As the weather improves and spring glides into summer, we hope you're managing to spend more time being active outdoors. Of course, with increased activity, the most overworked part of our bodies – our feet – take even more abuse. It's an important time to look after your feet, especially after long walks, sports activities, or travel.

CLUBFOOT: THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS CARE

It can be distressing and worrying when you have a newborn or child with clubfoot. Fortunately, whether unilateral or bilateral (one foot or two), talipes is relatively straightforward to treat and correct. With the use of manual manipulation, serial casts, and braces, the condition can often be fully and painlessly corrected.

The condition is more common than you might think. Clubfoot occurs in around one out of every 750 births. Although treatment pathways are well-developed and usually successful for the various forms of clubfoot, it is vital to keep up with bracing. There are several reasons why perseverance is vital.

Following the removal of casts, a regression can occur if the Foot Abduction Brace (FAB) is not worn as recommended (nightly and during naps). This brace helps train the foot and ankle to accept its new support structure during times when the body is at rest. Without persevering, it's likely that the clubfoot will begin to relapse, particularly during the infant growth period.

At 4 or 6 years old it may be possible to stop bracing treatment, but should be guided by a trained medical professional. We appreciate these can be challenging treatments for small children, who may not understand why they are wearing the devices. We encourage you to talk to your child about the end goal, and we are always here to help you advise on those conversations.

Fortunately, these braces do not need to be worn during the day, so their imposition is not too unbearable. Nevertheless, it's vital that you follow the program of treatments that have been devised for your child, to ensure improvement and prevent regression.

We're here at every stage of the process. Don't hesitate to call with any concerns you may have.

TELEMEDICINE APPOINTMENTS FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE & SAFETY

With COVID-19 still prevalent in our communities, we appreciate that some patients may not feel safe attending sessions in person, despite our stringent hygiene measures. For this reason, we are proud to announce that we now provide telemedicine appointments.

Talk to SoCal Foot and Ankle's registered podiatrists over a high-resolution video call and we'll do everything we can to help.

Videoconferencing via Zoom is most appropriate in the following scenarios:

- When you are seeking aftercare advice or following up on treatment.
- When you want an initial inspection and consultation.
- If you have a general query or concern about an ongoing condition.

In many instances, it may be possible to give a diagnosis over a video call. However, there will be times when it's preferable for our doctors to see you in the clinic. For instance, with a skin condition or symptoms requiring tactile investigation, this would be better conducted in person. We'll let you know if this is the case.

For many conditions, however, our patients find it most convenient to set up a video call from the comfort of their own homes. This is particularly true when they are injured or in recovery.



HOW DO TELEMEDICINE APPOINTMENTS WORK?

To make video appointments work best we recommend:

- You are somewhere with a stable broadband connection.
- You have a device you can easily move so that the camera can see your feet and ankles.
- You have Zoom downloaded onto that device.

We'll email you preceding the appointment with a link. Simply click on that link and it will take you to the meeting portal, where you'll be in a virtual waiting room. At the appointed time you'll be asked to join the meeting. Click yes and the connection will be made.

You may need to turn on your camera and microphone – look for the on screen icons and click on them.

Telemedicine offers a safe and convenient alternative to in-person appointments. SoCal Foot and Ankle look forward to meeting with you on screen, or in person – the choice is yours.