Monthly Newsletter

The Footcare CENTRE

Jul 2015 | Issue Number 32

Take care at your feet!

Stress Fractures

"Stress fracture" is often a scary term to the athletes and endurance runners familiar with this condition. Also known as a hairline fracture, a stress fracture is a crack that occurs in the bone without penetrating it all the way.

Stress fractures can occur in either the tibia or the fibula bones, as well as the metatarsals, which are the bones of the foot that connect to the toes.

What causes stress fractures?

Stress fractures in the lower leg are considered an overuse injury and are usually caused by a simple reason: doing too much too soon. It is especially common in high-impact athletic activities like running, gymnastics or basketball.

If you suddenly increase your running distances or duration, your muscles can become over-fatigued and stop absorbing the impact when your foot strikes the ground. Instead, the worn out muscles transfer the stress onto the bones of the lower leg, resulting in hairline cracks.

Weak or overly tight muscles, as well as training on hard surfaces and wearing the wrong footwear, can also contribute to stress fractures.

Women athletes tend to be at greater risk than men for stress fractures. This may be because of nutritional or hormonal factors and in female athletes, and increased risks of osteoporosis, or thinning of the bones.

(cont'd next page)

Latest/ upcoming developments

- *Our Podiatrist Franc Pirc has just completed a 2 day course on mobilisation of the foot.*

Contact Your Podiatrist

The Footcare Centre Ltd
8 Monument Green
Weybridge
Surrey
KT13 8QS
Tel: 01932 849373

Web:

www.thefootcarecentre.co.uk

All athletes should take note of stress fractures!

Nutrition and sufficient calcium is important for avoiding stress fractures

Stress Fractures

(Cont'd from previous page)

How is a stress fracture diagnosed?

It may be difficult to tell the difference between a stress fracture and a shin splint, but a trained professional will be able to make an accurate diagnosis with the aid of proper palpation (physical examination) and a bone scan.

X-rays may not be as thorough as bone scans in diagnosing stress fractures because the small crack in the bones might not be visible on a plain x-ray.

Untreated shin splints eventually progress to stress fractures. Ignoring a stress fracture may cause it to become larger and deeper, resulting in a complete fracture.

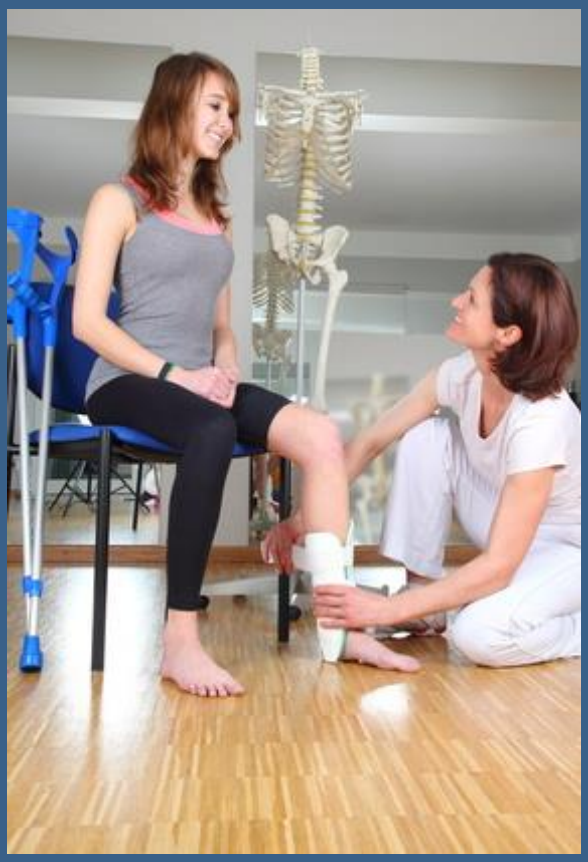
How are stress fractures treated?

When it comes to stress fractures, prevention is key: increase mileage gradually, adding not more than 10% of your distance per week, in order to give your bones and muscles time to strengthen and adjust to your physical activity.

Nutrition is also a key feature in avoiding stress fractures. If you don't get enough calcium in your diet, your body can leech the mineral from your bones, thus weakening them and making you more prone to fractures.

Treatment focuses on allowing the bone to heal itself. Depending on the severity of the stress fracture, you may need to discontinue the activity which caused it and resort to lower-impact activities such as swimming for at least 6 to 8 weeks.

Your podiatrist may prescribe medication for pain relief as well as methods to improve non- or semi- weightbearing to help you keep the weight off your stress-fractured bone. More severe fractures might require the application of a cast.



Stress fractures can be diagnosed with the help of proper palpation and a bone scan

How to Take Care of a Diabetic Patient's Foot

Diabetes is serious metabolic disease that needs constant observation. It is a disease both of the metabolic and endocrine system. Many people around the world are diagnosed with this condition every day, and its mortality rate has been rapidly increasing.

Diabetes is a very complicated condition; it can go undetected for years until such time that certain complications develop. It can lead to multiple organ failure and death. What makes diabetes debilitating?

Diabetes is characterized by a persistent increase in blood glucose levels. Glucose is an essential component in the creation of energy which in turn is used by the body to perform daily activities. For glucose to enter the cells, it needs to bind with insulin.

Do apply lotion on your feet

However, in diabetes, there is low or total lack of insulin. Glucose then accumulates in the bloodstream causing an increase in blood sugar. It doesn't end there because the high blood sugars, over time, may start to cause secondary problems.

For example, nerves in the lower extremities, especially the feet, lose function. This results in a condition called peripheral neuropathy. It may cause a diabetic patient to be unable to feel even a slight prick, and experience delayed reaction to harmful stimuli.

To be able to protect the feet from risk factors, close monitoring has to be done. Here are 8 top foot care tips for diabetics:

1. Examine the feet daily, assess whether there are wounds, bruises, calluses and even the tiniest scratch. These can all lead to skin breakdown.

2. Wash your feet daily with gentle and non-irritating soap.

3. Maintain the softness and smoothness of your skin. Apply body lotion in your feet avoiding the spaces between your toes (as this can cause fungus to thrive).

4. Wear the right type of socks and shoes. Avoid shoes that are tight fitting and are stiff because it may damage the surrounding skin of the feet.

5. Cut your toe nails straight across the top, leaving part of the white nail plate. Since you are diabetic, you may not be able to feel a cut or have the blood supply required to heal it. If in doubt, let your podiatrist cut your toe nails instead!

(cont'd next page)

The Footcare Centre

8 Monument Green

Weybridge

Surrey

KT13 8QS

Phone:

01932 849373

E-Mail:

info@thefootcarecentre.co.uk

Web Site:

www.thefootcarecentre.co.uk

If you would like a copy of this newsletter emailed to you every month, then please let reception know and they will ensure that your email address is added to our distribution list.

*The **Care**, **Professionalism** and **Time** that your feet deserve*

The Footcare CENTRE

Like / Follow us…..

www.facebook.com/thefootcarecentre

https://twitter.com/footcarecentre

How to Take Care of a Diabetic Patient's Foot

(Cont'd from previous page)

6. Avoid sharp objects that can scratch and puncture your feet. You also have to avoid extreme cold and heat.

7. Visit your podiatrist regularly to check your feet.

8. To take care of your feet you have to control your diabetes first; this is the key to avoiding foot problems when you have diabetes.

Achilles Tendon

The Achilles Tendon or its covering, the paratenon, is a common source of damage, pain or inflammation.

The tendon itself with long term repetitive trauma can undergo a degenerative process called tendinosis and in some cases can rupture completely. The paratenon often becomes inflamed – a condition called ***paratenonitis***.

There are many reasons for Achilles tendon problems including training regimes, tight calf muscles, or over-use. Abnormal over pronation is sometimes a mechanism for injury, or can delay resolution, due to the 'whipping' motion placed on the tendon.

At The Footcare Centre the podiatrists will assess and treat any abnormal biomechanical strains placed upon the tendon, and can utilise electrotherapy such as Low Level Laser Therapy in treating Achilles tendon problems. Alternatively the podiatrist can now offer the use of Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy (E.S.W.T) as a treatment for chronic musculoskeletal disorders.

For any further information regarding the following treatment options please contact us.

Attribution: All images are from Fotolia.