



SHENANDOAH
PODIATRY

If your hurting feet could talk...

Family Ties: A Look at Hereditary Foot Conditions

About the Doctor



Jennifer Keller, DPM

Tagging along with your mom to a doctor appointment could redirect your career path.

That's exactly what happened to Dr. Jennifer Keller while an undergraduate in biochemistry at Virginia Tech. Her mom's podiatrist served as a mentor helping guide the decision to become a podiatrist. After obtaining her Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree at NYCPM, Dr. Keller completed a foot and ankle surgical residency at Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore, MD. Away from the office, Dr. Keller enjoys time with her children, horses, dogs and cats. While born a Yankee in NY, she has adapted well to life in Botetourt County.

Get Social w/Us



On Thanksgiving, take the time to look around the table and be thankful for your family. If you have a bunion, you can thank your mom for that too! That's right, some foot conditions are actually in your DNA. Just like the color of your hair and eyes, your parents can pass along traits that increase your risk for toe deformities like bunions and hammertoes, nerve problems like neuropathy, high blood pressure and poor circulation, cancer, diabetes, skin issues like eczema and allergies, high arches, and even ingrown toenails!

Of course, having a genetic predisposition for certain foot conditions doesn't necessarily mean you will struggle with these problems—you can't blame your parents completely! There are things you can do to prevent the onset of issues, particularly by focusing on footwear. Often, bunions, hammertoes, and ingrown toenails can be encouraged by ill-fitting shoes, with toes squished together and weight unevenly distributed. Make sure your shoes fit and have a wide toe box and a low heel, and you just might dodge a deformity!

In addition, if you know you're prone to certain conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes, take steps to eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly. Does your dad have really, really dry skin? Make sure yours stays supple by applying moisturizer daily. If you keep your genes in mind, you can stop problems before they start, and that's something for which you can definitely be grateful!

Daily Diligence: The Importance of Diabetic Self-Foot Exams



It's National Diabetes Awareness Month—are you aware of how this condition affects your feet? Let's put it this way: diabetes and your feet don't get along! The nerve damage often associated with the disease can make it difficult to feel an injury, and the poor circulation—also a common companion to diabetes—makes for a slow healing process with an increased chance of infection.

Clearly these complications are not on friendly terms with your feet! In fact, together they're a dangerous combination, like a one-two punch. However, you can fight back by checking your feet daily for trouble, so early treatment can nip it in the bud. Even the smallest of scrapes can wind up an enormous problem. So cozy up with your feet and give them a once over, once a day. Here's how:

Sit down and place your clean, dry, bare foot across your opposite knee. Now look and feel for any changes in color and temperature. Do you notice any dry patches, bumps, lumps, or abrasions? What about blisters, corns and calluses, or discolored toenails? Don't forget to check between your toes too, and for hard-to-see spots, try using a hand held mirror or enlisting a loved one's help. If you find anything out of the ordinary, contact our office right away so we can stop the problem before it snowballs into something much worse.

If diabetes is the enemy, be your own best ally by performing self-foot exams daily, and remember—you've got our friendly staff to depend on too!

After-Dinner Stretches

There's nothing like kicking back and putting your feet up after a big turkey dinner, especially if your arch is aching, your toes are troubled, and your heel is hurting. If your feet feel like you've been wearing pointy pilgrim boots all day, or the tendons in them are as tight as the waist of your pants right about now, here are some stretches to try during half-time of the football game:

Sit with your legs out in front of you and knees bent. Grab your toes and slowly bend them back, hold for 10 to 15 seconds, then enjoy some more cranberry sauce. Now, face a wall and stick one foot behind the other. Bend at the knees while trying to keep your feet flat on the floor, hold for 10 or 15 seconds again, have another plate of stuffing, then repeat. Next, find a step and stand on it so that your heels are hanging off the edge. Slowly lower your heels and hold.

Okay, now get back to your spot on the couch because the second half of the football game is starting. While you're there, raise an extended leg and rotate your ankle in a circle, switch directions, then switch ankles. You can also try pretending that your big toe is a pen and use it to write the alphabet in the air. When you're done with your ABCs, grab your cloth napkin and with legs outstretched, loop it around your foot, then pull the ends toward you. Now your feet should be feeling as good as that pumpkin pie looks!

Please Pass the Peanut Butter Bars!

In honor of National Peanut Butter Lover's Month (you know who you are!), here's an irresistible recipe that's sure to please:

First, gather your ingredients:

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup peanut butter
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 2 cups old fashioned oats

Don't forget the frosting!

- 1/3 cup butter, softened
- 2 Tbsp. cocoa
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- ¼ cup warm milk

Now prepare to be "peanut butter pleased."

- Cream butter and sugars together in a large bowl.
- Beat in eggs, vanilla and peanut butter.
- Mix in flour, baking soda and salt. Then mix in the oats.
- Spread dough into a greased jelly roll pan. Press down so entire pan is evenly covered.
- Bake at 325 degrees F for 20 minutes. It will appear to still be a little soft when it comes out.
- Let cool completely, then get your frosting on...

Frosting:

- Beat butter, cocoa, salt and vanilla together. Add in powdered sugar and warm milk and beat until smooth. Spread evenly over rolled peanut butter bars.

Now, try not to eat them all at once!



Sesamoiditis: Tiny Bones Can Be a Big Pain!

Believe it or not, there are 28 bones in your foot! This includes the tiny bones near the base of your big toe called the sesamoids. While it sounds kind of silly (like something Sylvester the Cat would say), "suffering succotash" they can hurt when injured!

Unlike other bones, sesamoids are connected to tendons and embedded in muscle. They act like pulleys, sliding over tendons to help your toe move. Like other bones, however, the sesamoids can fracture, and while small, can pack a painful punch when damaged.

Their surrounding tendons can also become irritated and inflamed—a condition known as sesamoiditis. This is a form of tendinitis, and can come on gradually, or in the case of a fracture, happen suddenly. Pain is in the ball of the foot beneath the big toe. You may notice bruising and swelling, and an inability to bend your toe without discomfort. So, "what's up, Doc?" What should you do?

Well, first of all, rest! Take it easy for a while to give yourself time to heal. For now, ice should become your best friend. We can recommend medication to help ease pain, too, and you may want to try special cushioned pads to keep pressure off of the area. Wearing stiff-soled shoes can also aid in decreasing discomfort. Sometimes taping the big toe to keep movement to a minimum helps as well.

Follow these guidelines faithfully and your recovery could be as speedy as the Road Runner.

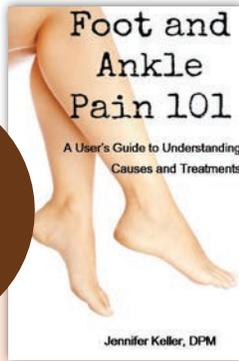
"Th-th-th-th-that's all folks!"





SHENANDOAH PODIATRY

60 Summerfield Court, #102
Roanoke, VA 24019
(540) 904-1458
ShenandoahPodiatry.com



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Call (540) 904-1458 or visit
ShenandoahPodiatry.com

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Don't Let Your Leftovers Go to Waste!

Use this guide to store and keep food fresh



Dinner's done and you're as stuffed as your turkey, but now what do you do with all the leftovers? Follow these guidelines to ensure plenty of midnight snacks:

Store leftovers within two hours of cooking to maintain quality and avoid inviting bacteria to the party. Make sure it is cooled before storing and that it's placed in a well-sealed container.

Fridge & Freezer Facts:	Refrigerated	Frozen
Cooked turkey	lasts 3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Gravy	eat within 1 to 2 days	2 to 3 months
Mashed potatoes	3 days	10 months
Cranberry sauce	stays good 10-14 days	1-2 months
Baked apple or pumpkin pie	fresh for 3 to 4 days	1-2 months

Wait a minute—who are we kidding? There's never any pie left!

Now, let the late night grazing begin. Start making those turkey sandwiches. Go ahead and eat some cranberry sauce for breakfast—we won't tell! Remember, though, if ever in doubt, throw it out.