



## Protect Your Ankles Against Sprains

There are plenty of ways to be active over the summer. Unfortunately, this also leads to plenty of ways for ankles to get into trouble.

Now, it's impossible to guarantee that you'll never suffer an ankle sprain. The potential of injury will always exist as long as we expose ourselves to activity and the outside world. That's life!

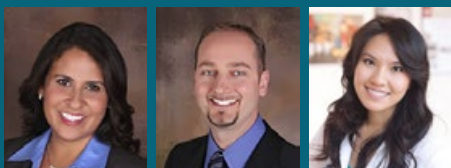
However, the benefits of getting out there will almost always outweigh the risks—especially if you're taking the right steps to reduce your chances of sprains.

Here are a few easy ways to help your ankles stay stable and uninjured during summer fun:

- **Prepare for Movement** – Taking some time to warm up before you dive into a run or sport can help your ankles and supporting parts get ready for the demands ahead. What this means is about 5 minutes of warming up with some calf stretching, ankle exercise, and light jogging before really getting into it.
- **Build Your Balance** – Instability is one of the big contributing factors to an ankle sprain, but balance training can help strengthen your ankles to provide enough support and reaction when you need it most. Balance exercises can include standing on one foot for a certain period of time, building up in challenge by standing on a pillow, closing your eyes, and/or trying to hop from one foot to the other (just be careful!).
- **Wear the Right Shoes** – Your shoes should be made for the activity you're engaging in. Running and basketball, for example, require different demands of the ankles, and shoes for each are built to address those needs better!

If you have had ankle problems in the past, your risks for future ankle injuries may be higher. If they are, or you would like further advice on the best ways to protect your ankles, please let us know. We'll be happy to help!

### About the Doctors



Drs. Nitza N. Rodriguez, Robert J. Spencer, and Han Nguyen are experienced, highly-trained, compassionate foot & ankle specialists who treat all conditions of the foot and ankle in infants, children, and adults. Dr. Rodriguez is fluent in English and Spanish and has additional training and experience in lower extremity pediatric deformities including clubfoot. Dr. Spencer has a special interest in trauma, sports-related injuries, and reconstruction of the foot and ankle. Dr. Nguyen's clinical focus and expertise deals directly with the treatment of bunion and hammertoe deformities, flatfoot deformities, ankle arthritis, and joint reconstruction. Learn more about the doctors at [www.socalfootandankle.com](http://www.socalfootandankle.com).



# Fungal Protection with Aquatic Footwear



If you frequent anywhere that's warm, damp, and gets a lot of foot traffic, then the risk of picking up a fungal infection on the feet will be present. This can include both athlete's foot and the nasty stuff that can turn your toenails into a thick, sickly-colored mess.

Public pools, gym locker rooms, and the showers you can find at places such as camp sites can all contain the right conditions for making fungus thrive. In these situations, having some cover on your feet can go a long way toward picking up something nasty from someone else.

Foot protection comes in a few different ways. Here are some options to consider:

- **Flip-flops** are cheap and easy to wear. However, what is easy to slip on can also be easy to slip off. They're better than nothing for short-term protection, but definitely not something you would want to wear for extended periods of time.
- **Shower shoes** provide a bit more grip, stability and protection than flip-flops, but not a ton. They also tend to have more fashion options, if that's important to you.
- **Aqua socks** are a great option as they provide full, surrounding coverage of the foot—top and bottom. They tend to be the most expensive of the options, but we feel they're well worth it.

Whatever you choose to cover your feet with, be sure to keep checking for signs of fungal infection. If you see a rash on the skin or small spots/streaks on nails that don't improve (or even worse, get bigger), let us know! The sooner you can get in for treatment, the better.

## Mark Your Calendars

- August 2** National Coloring Book Day – Don't feel you need to stay within the lines.
- August 4** National Friendship Day – Who haven't you seen in a while?
- August 8** National Happiness Happens Day – Recognize and celebrate what makes you happy!
- August 15** National Lemon Meringue Pie Day – Eat; don't throw.
- August 19** National Aviation Day – Also the birthday of Orville Wright!
- August 24** National Waffle Day – Don't be undecided about whether you want some.
- August 28** National Bow Tie Day – Look proper for a nice day out.
- August 31** National Trail Mix Day – Go goofy for gorp!



# Make Bike Safety a Priority for Your Kids

Bikes are a great way to get around, whether heading down trails on vacation or just getting from point to point in the neighborhood. For kids, they can be one of the first tastes of freedom they get—but that doesn't mean safety should be ignored.

Here are a few reminders when it comes to keeping your child safer on their bicycle:

- **Make Sure Helmets Fit Well** – An ideal bike helmet should sit level on the head and cover the forehead. Having to roll the helmet forward or back for a proper fit is... not a proper fit. If a helmet shows any signs of damage, ditch it and get a new one that has full integrity.
- **You've Checked the Bike Recently, Right?** – A bike that has been hanging out in the garage for a while is one that needs to be checked out. Is it still the right size for your child? Do the handlebars and seat need adjustment? How are the brakes and tire pressure? Make sure all of these factors are A-OK before your child hops on.
- **Make Your Child Noticeable** – Biking should not be done at night. It's better to pick your child up in a car than have them ride home at dark. Even in the daytime, bright colors, reflectors, and flashing lights will all help your child be seen by drivers and others better.



## Ajo Blanco

### Ingredients

- 1 green apple, peeled, cored, and chopped
- 1 large garlic clove, chopped
- 3 c. crustless 1-inch cubes of day-old white country bread
- 1 c. seedless green grapes, halved
- ½ c. whole blanched almonds
- ½ c. whole milk
- Kosher salt
- ¾ c. extra-virgin olive oil (with additional for serving)
- 3 Tbsp. red wine vinegar (with additional for serving)
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ½ c. sliced almonds, blanched

### Preparation

- Combine apple, garlic, bread cubes, grapes, almonds, milk, and 2 cups of water in a medium bowl. Season with salt, cover, and chill for 6-24 hours.
- Transfer the mixture to a blender and puree. Add water by the tablespoon if it is too thick and continue until it is smooth. With the motor still running, gradually add the oil and vinegar until soup is emulsified.
- Season soup with salt, pepper, and more vinegar, if wanted. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a large bowl. Cover and chill until very cold.



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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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# Have a Strange Sensation in the Ball of Your Foot?



Does it feel like you're always stepping on a little stone that's lodged in the front of your shoe, just beneath the toes, but nothing's there? Is it sometimes accompanied by a burning, tingling or numbness around the toes and the ball of your foot?

What you *might* be experiencing is a neuroma. What's that?

A neuroma is a thickening of the tissue surrounding one or more of your nerves. This type of growth is benign, but it can compress and irritate the nerves it surrounds. This leads to strange, painful, and annoying sensations.

What can cause a neuroma to form? Basically, any sort of consistent pressure or irritation to the area could do it. This might involve wearing shoes that are too cramped toward the front of the foot (high heels tend to be a number one suspect), engaging in extended running or other sports with high foot impact can also cause problems if the feet aren't provided enough time for rest and recovery.

It might also be possible that the cause is more natural in nature; that you have a foot shape that makes the development of a neuroma more likely.

Whatever the potential cause, your best course of action is to seek proper diagnosis and treatment for the condition. Don't let that phantom pebble drive you up the wall; get the help you need today!