

Head to Toe[®]

Health Report

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Foot Drop and the Common Peroneal Nerve

Have you ever crossed your legs, only to find your leg tingling with a sensation of 'pins & needles?' Since the Common Peroneal nerve is relatively exposed, similar to the 'funny bone' in your elbow, this is not unusual.

A nerve the thickness of a pen, the Common Peroneal Nerve crosses from behind your knee, around the outside of your knee, to enter the muscles of the outside of your leg. This nerve gets compressed between the white covering of the muscles and the underlying bone, the fibula. Many times this nerve becomes subtly compressed and goes unnoticed.

This nerve is susceptible to compression and may cause symptoms like difficulty lifting up your foot or toes, so your foot drags.

(Continued on back page)

Dedicated to Your

Winter 2009/2010

Health

Your skin: What causes uneven skin tone?

An uneven skin tone, or hyperpigmentation, is the result of an overproduction of melanin. Melanin is what gives skin and hair its color; helps protect skin against damaging UV light and absorbs heat from the sun. However, an overproduction of melanin stimulated by excessive sun exposure, hormones, or scarring, leads to a mottled, uneven skin tone.

1) Sun exposure: When skin is repeatedly exposed to UV light, sun damage occurs. Brown spots appear as a result of too much melanin being produced to help protect skin from UV light.

2) Hormones: Melasma is hormone-related hyperpigmentation caused by increased hormone stimulation. It is most commonly experienced by women who are pregnant (which is why it's also known as the "mask of pregnancy") or taking contraceptives, but can also be a reaction to cosmetics or medications.

3) Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation: This is a darkening of skin that's the result of scarring, which can be caused by acne lesions or skin injury.

Speak with a skin care professional, to learn more about treatments for hyperpigmentation or other skin concerns you may have.

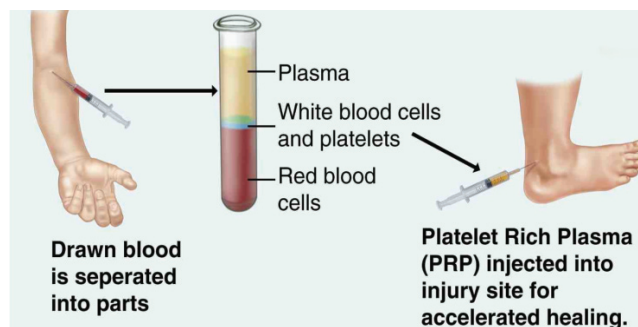
Cutting-edge Treatment for Tendon and Ligament Injuries.

Tendon and muscle injuries are common in elite and weekend athletes. Treatment of these injuries in both groups is rapidly evolving. Sports medicine patients are demanding better and less invasive solutions for

all types of musculoskeletal disorders. Recently, two of the Pittsburgh Steeler's biggest stars, Hines Ward and Troy Polamalu, used their own blood in an innovative treatment option for their injury prior to winning the Super Bowl; beating our home team Arizona Cardinals.

The body has an amazing capacity to heal itself. When the body becomes injured, a natural healing process occurs to repair the damaged tissue. The body signals platelets and other components in our blood supply to migrate to the site of injury. Under normal conditions, these platelets release a variety of growth factors that initiate and subsequently promote healing. New advances in medicine have been developed to harness and concentrate these platelets and growth factors to be precisely introduced to the injury site in an injectable form. With Platelet-rich Plasma (PRP) therapy, the patient's own blood is used to accelerate recovery and channel the body's natural power of healing and tissue repair. Healing in many instances may be associated with reduced pain and a quicker return to activity.

Many active patients are familiar with repetitive or overuse injuries that can cause micro tears of the muscle and/or tendon fibers resulting in weakness and pain at the injury site. These conditions affect the normal healing process of the damaged tissue and can lead to pain and dysfunction. A study looking at the treatment of chronic Plantar Fasciitis pain with platelet



therapy showed 77.9% of patients demonstrated a favorable result after one year: Barrett S, Erredge S, *Podiatry Today*. 2004; 17:36-42.

It should be noted that PRP is a medical treatment, not a performance enhancing agent. Unlike blood doping, which increases the number of red blood cells in an athlete's body to enhance endurance and performance, PRP is prescribed for injuries to encourage healing. This therapy may be a solution to chronic ailments, at a fraction of the cost of surgery. Therefore, it is possible that insurance companies authorize this treatment in the future. Outside of sports medicine, this treatment is being used in other fields such as heart surgery and wound healing.'



KOLD NEWS 3

LIVE | LOCAL | LATE BREAKING

Dr. Shih discusses some of the latest and most advanced medical treatment options available at Head to Toe Healthcare, PLC

Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT)

ESWT has been used to treat musculoskeletal disorders in Europe since the early 1990s, and is a derivative of lithotripsy, the mechanical breaking up of renal stones with sound waves. A study showed an 82 percent success rate with ESWT, which was comparable to minimally invasive plantar fasciotomy (83% success) without the risks, complications, and lengthy recovery time inherent to surgery. *Weil Jr. LS et al. J Foot & Ankle Surg. 41(3), 2003.* The procedure does not require anesthesia, requires a minimal amount of time, patients can walk immediately, and return to normal activity within a few days of the procedure. Initially when this procedure became available for heel pain, it had to be performed at a surgical center or hospital. The excessive cost essentially rendered this treatment a non-option. Today, this treatment can now be performed in an office setting.

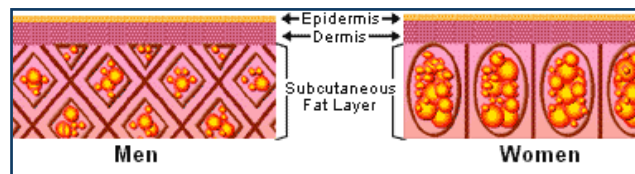
Typical treatments last about 15 minutes. Most patients require one treatment session per week for three weeks. Some patients report immediate pain relief after the treatment, although it can take up to four weeks for pain relief to begin. Additional benefits are that both feet can be treated at the same time, no incision- no risk of infection or scar tissue

formation, future treatment options are not reduced, the therapy is well tolerated and allows for a quick return to activities/work.

Noninvasive & painless Cellulite reduction; The Skinny on Cellulite & Acoustic Wave Therapy

Cellulite is the fatty deposits under your skin that gives your skin an appearance of being dimpled or some describe it as an orange peel appearance of skin primarily on thighs and buttocks. A lot of people who are in decent physical shape can also suffer from unsightly cellulite. Factors such as hormones, genetics, life style, level of exercise, diet, and metabolism all play a role.

For the most part women suffer from cellulite at a much high percentage than men because a woman's fat is arranged in different chambers separated by collagen fibers. See pictorials below.



The dividing walls (septa) of fatty tissue in women run perpendicular to the surface of the skin. As fat cells enlarge, the perpendicular septa do not hold the fat cells, but rather press directly upon the skin, creating dimples on the surface of the skin; cellulite.

Acoustic Wave Therapy is one of the latest treatment alternatives on the market, a procedure that uses pressure waves that reduces cellulite by manipulating the connective tissue deep under the skin's surface using acoustic pulses that pass through the skin and fat to release the cells causing cellulite – the fat cells that are 'trapped' under the skin's surface. The pressure breaks up the collagen of the septae and releases the skin.

The acoustic wave process works by increasing circulation, collagen production, and tissue elasticity, and the end result is considerably smoother skin. Inch loss is generally not significant with this treatment.

The procedure generally takes less than 30 minutes and oftentimes several treatments (6 to 12) are necessary to see noticeable results. Results tend to be better for those who are near their ideal weight, and follow a reasonably healthy diet and exercise regimen. The procedure is painless and no anesthesia is required. To date, no serious complications have been reported. Some patients have experienced slight discomfort, redness, and/or bruising in the treated areas.

Radiofrequency Nerve Ablation (RFNA)

Radio Frequency (RF) nerve ablation has been used by Interventional Pain Physicians who have performed many thousands of spinal and peripheral

nerve ablations with this type of device for patients with chronic pain. A study from 1989 found 68% of patients treated for Morton's Neuroma to have been pleased with their treatment *Finney et al. JAPMA. 79(12) 1989*. Advances in this technology are occurring, and future studies may show higher patient satisfaction results. RF has also been used to treat plantar fasciitis. RF therapy uses radiofrequency energy to disrupt nerve function. When this is done to a peripheral nerve, the nerve can no longer transmit pain from the site. The closest comparative treatment to RFNA is cryotherapy (cold therapy). The crucial difference between the two technologies, is that RFNA can isolate sensory fibers from motor fibers, so only sensory (nerves that provide pain sensation) fibers are treated. With Cryotherapy, the motor fibers that activate muscles are damaged. This can lead to loss of muscle function and/or various foot deformities.

Erectile Dysfunction & your vision

According to a report in the April issue of *Archives of Ophthalmology*, two medications used to treat erectile dysfunction in men (tadalafil and sildenafil) do not appear to have visual side effects when taken daily for six months, despite concerns about eye-related complications.

The advent of Viagra, Cialis and Leveitra has profoundly changed the treatment of erectile dysfunction. These medications are known as selective phosphodiesterase type 5 (PDE5) inhibitors because they treat erectile dysfunction by interfering with the action of the compound PDE5 on the vessels of the penis. However, PDE5 inhibitors may also act on similar compounds in the retina, the part of the eye that receives and transmits images.

"Furthermore, PDE5 inhibitors can exert direct effects on the retina, and such effects probably account for many of the visual side effects such as blue-tinged vision and light sensitivity that have been reported," the researchers concluded.

However, "our results indicate that there is no cumulative damage or effect of clinical significance for either 5 milligrams of tadalafil or 50 milligrams of sildenafil taken daily for six months." No significant differences were found between treatment and placebo groups in the study.

Men who take PDE5 inhibitors to treat their erectile dysfunction should also be followed up by an optometrist for ocular disorders such as diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration and ocular vascular disease.

7 Interesting, Amusing And Even a Little Scary Health Facts

- 1) Motorists who talk on cell phones are more impaired than drunk drivers with blood-alcohol levels exceeding .08!
- 2) Some parts of the world protect their babies from disease by bathing them in beer.
- 3) The word "gymnasium" comes from the Greek word

gymnazein, which means "to exercise naked."

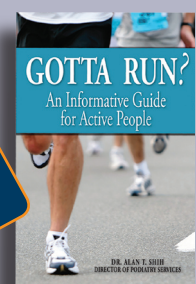
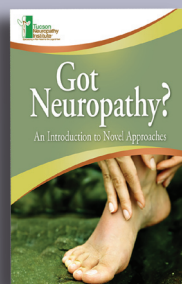
- 4) The average American eats at McDonalds more than 1,800 times in their lifetime.
- 5) During your lifetime, you'll eat about 60,000 pounds of food, that's the weight of about 6 elephants.
- 6) The average adult has 46 miles of nerves.
- 7) When having a conversation, women make eye contact 15% more frequently than men.

Update: New Nail fungus treatment

Just in case you missed our last newsletter, a new laser treatment is available for toenail fungus (onychomycosis). Visit www.LaserFungalNails.com to learn more. (Individual results may vary.)

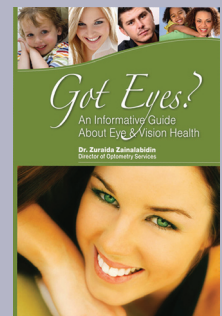
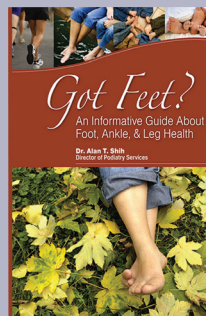


As part of Head to Toe Healthcare's mission to educate, we have created this information for you. Call the toll free number below or visit our website to receive one of our informative guides to your health



"Got Neuropathy?" / "Gotta Run?"

Also read our "Got Feet?" & "Got Eyes?" books!



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Foot drop: (Continued)

It may cause numbness or buzzing below your knee, or feel like your leg is going to "give out" on you.

Depending on the severity of nerve compromise, several conservative and surgical treatment options exist.

If you have a drop foot, traditional conservative treatments involve a brace called an AFO (ankle foot orthosis) which is essentially a splint to keep you leg and foot at roughly 90 degrees; to help walking. More advanced AFO-like devices offer some assistance in helping to pull up the foot.

A relatively new device that may help with this condition helps to stimulate the Common Peroneal Nerve. About the size of an iPod and is worn around the calf, this device sends low level electrical signals directly to a motor nerve in the leg, stimulating the muscles to raise the patient's foot at the appropriate time during walking.

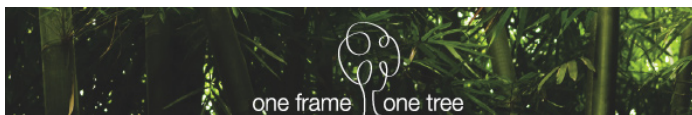
Surgical treatment could involve a tendon transfer, moving a tendon that typically pulls the foot downward, to an orientation where it pulls upward on the affected foot.

There are multiple factors to consider, your physician can best advise you to your most appropriate treatment option.



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Inside This Issue:

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