


June 2010

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Do you suffer from "Flat feet"?

Recently an article ran in the **New York Times**, *My Left Foot: The High Costs of Fallen Arches* [Click to Read the Article](#). Jennifer Prestifilippo interviewed one of our physicians, Dr. Jason Bottoms for more details.

Ask Dr. Jason Bottoms, D.P.M

- Barry University School of Podiatric Medicine (2004)
- Residency training in the Foot and Ankle Surgery at Northlake Medical Center in Tucker, Georgia (2006)
- Vice President of Hillsborough County Podiatric Medical Association

What are "flat feet"?

A condition where the arch of the foot collapses, with the entire sole of the foot coming into complete or near-complete contact with the ground.



Normal Arch

Why is there pain associated with "flat feet"?

Pain occurs because soft tissues (tendon and ligaments) have been stretched or torn. As the soft tissues continue to be stressed, symptoms tend to worsen. When pain in the foot, ankle, back or knees does occur, the feet should be evaluated.



Flat Arch

What is the treatment for "flat feet"?

Anti-inflammatory medications, icing, physical therapy, supportive taping, bracing, and orthotics are common treatments for painful progressive "flat foot". (Please consult your physician before taking any medications.) In some cases, a surgery may need to be performed to repair a torn or damaged tendon and restore normal function.

If conservative treatment doesn't work what are my options?

In less severe cases of adult "flat foot", procedures involving tendons and ligaments (i.e., soft tissue procedures) may suffice. These usually result in less recovery time and postoperative discomfort. However, if the problem is a more severe deformity and arthritis has developed in the joints, then bone work may also be appropriate. In these types of procedures, bones are realigned and fixed in position as to actually construct an arch in the foot. Often times, joints are fused in order to eliminate pain that results from movement of these joints. These procedures usually require more recovery time in order for the bones to heal in the correct position.

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