

## Welcome to Reconstructive Foot & Ankle Institute, LLC NEWS YOU CAN USE!

### About Reconstructive Foot & Ankle Institute, LLC:

We provide Comprehensive Foot and Ankle Care to the residents of Central Maryland with offices currently in Hagerstown and Frederick, Maryland. From basic care of ingrown toenails, heel pain and warts to reconstructive procedures and management of complex pain conditions we provide a one stop shop for all your needs. In office and online retail stores featuring all the medicines and foot care products we recommend at our Institute are available to you for your convenience in our office. Same day and emergency appointments are available without a wait. Our staff is approachable and knowledgeable with a willingness to help and solve your foot and ankle problems. We focus on conservative non surgical treatment and exhaust these options prior to recommending surgery. Our providers work with you as a partner by listening to and educating you about treatment options so you can make an informed choice of treatment that fits your individual needs.

### FIVE MYTHS ABOUT FOOT CARE

#### From bunions to broken toes, local foot and ankle surgeon has heard it all

“Don’t cross your eyes, they’ll stay that way!”

Old wives’ tales and myths like that example are fun to laugh at. We believed them as children. “Step on a crack and you’ll break your mother’s back.” But there are other myths that are no laughing matter, especially when they involve your health.

From bunions to broken toes, foot and ankle surgeon Daniel D. Michaels, DPM, MS, FACFAS, has heard it all. Dr. Michaels treats patients at offices in Frederick and Hagerstown, Maryland. He shares five myths about foot care and the realities behind them.

**Myth:** Cutting a notch (a “V”) in a toenail will relieve the pain of ingrown toenails.

**Reality:** When a toenail is ingrown, the nail curves downward and grows into the skin. Cutting a “V” in the toenail does not affect its growth. New nail growth will continue to curve downward. Cutting a “V” may actually cause more problems and is painful in many cases.

**Myth:** My foot or ankle can’t be broken if I can walk on it.

**Reality:** It’s entirely possible to walk on a foot or ankle with a broken bone. “It depends on your threshold for pain, as well as the severity of the injury,” says Dr. Michaels. But it’s not a smart idea. Walking with a broken bone can cause further damage.

It is crucial to stay off an injured foot until diagnosis by a foot and ankle surgeon. Until then, apply ice and elevate the foot to reduce pain.

**Myth:** Shoes cause bunions.

**Reality:** Bunions are most often caused by an inherited faulty mechanical structure of the foot. It is not the bunion itself that is inherited, but certain foot types make a person prone to developing a bunion. While wearing shoes that crowd the toes together can, over time, make bunions more painful, shoes themselves do not cause bunions.

Although some treatments can ease the pain of bunions, only surgery can correct the deformity.

**Myth:** A doctor can't fix a broken toe.

**Reality:** Nineteen of the 26 bones in the foot are toe bones.

“What I tell patients is, there are things we can do to make a broken toe heal better and prevent problems later on, like arthritis or toe deformities,” Dr. Michaels says.

Broken toes that aren't treated correctly can also make walking and wearing shoes difficult. A foot and ankle surgeon will x-ray the toe to learn more about the fracture. If the broken toe is out of alignment, the surgeon may have to insert a pin, screw or plate to reposition the bone.

**Myth:** Corns have roots.

**Reality:** A corn is a small build-up of skin caused by friction. Dr. Michaels says many corns result from a hammertoe deformity, where the toe knuckle rubs against the shoe. The only way to eliminate these corns is to surgically correct the hammertoe condition.

Unlike a callus, a corn has a central core of hard material. But corns do not have roots. Attempting to cut off a corn or applying medicated corn pads can lead to serious infection or even amputation. A foot and ankle surgeon can safely evaluate and treat corns and the conditions contributing to them.

To make an appointment with the Reconstructive Foot and Ankle Institute, LLC contact the office in Hagerstown at 301.797.8554 (877.797.FOOT), 1150 Professional Court, Suite C or Frederick at 301.418.6014 (866.338.FOOT), 2100 Old Farm Drive, Suite D or visit the practice Web site at [WWW.RFAINSTITUTE.COM](http://WWW.RFAINSTITUTE.COM)