

November Newsletter

nextstep
foot and ankle centers



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Health Risks For Diabetics

November is American Diabetes Month. This month, we come together to ring the alarm on the diabetes epidemic. This is the time to educate yourself and loved ones on the risks of diabetes. According to the CDC, 9.3% of the US population is diabetic. Diabetes affects the foot primarily by its actions on the blood vessels and nerves. This often leads to hospital stays for infection and ultimately amputations. There were nearly 90,000 major amputations in the United States last year as the result of diabetes. However, it has been estimated that nearly 85% of limb loss can be prevented through education and patient care plans.

If/when your feet become numb, they are at risk for becoming deformed. One way this happens is through diabetic foot ulcers. Open sores may become infected. Another way is the bone condition Charcot (pronounced “sharko”) foot. This is one of the most serious foot problems a diabetic can face. It warps the shape of your foot when your bones fracture and disintegrate, and yet you continue to walk on it because it doesn’t hurt. Diabetic foot ulcers and early phases of Charcot foot fractures can be treated with a total contact cast.

The shape of your foot molds the cast. It lets your ulcer heal by distributing weight and relieving pressure. If you have Charcot foot, the cast controls your foot’s movement and supports its contours if you don’t put any weight on it. To use a total contact cast, you need good blood flow in your foot. The cast is changed every week or two until your foot heals. A custom-walking boot is another way to treat your Charcot foot. It supports the foot until all the swelling goes down, which can take as long as a year. You should keep from putting your weight on the Charcot foot. Surgery is considered if your deformity is too severe for a brace or shoe.

Pumpkin Contest

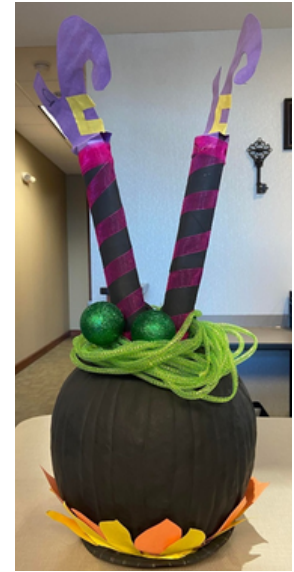
This Halloween season, we had an employee pumpkin contest amongst all the departments and clinics! See photos below of all the submitted pumpkins!



Bridgeton



Managers



O'Fallon



Edwardsville



Billing



Call Center



South County



Alton



DME

Employee November Birthdays:

Dr Dan Thouvenot, November 1

Dr Sam Bernard, November 4

Val, November 5

Dr Krista Nelson, November 14

Angie, November 14

Chelsea, November 24



Podiatrist Spotlight

Christina Hawthorne, DPM

Dr. Christina Hawthorne received her Bachelor of Science degree in biology with a minor in English at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. She received her medical degree from the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine in Cleveland. Dr. Hawthorne completed a two-year surgical residency in Farmington, MO at the Mineral Area Regional Medical Center and served as chief resident during her last year of residency.

Dr. Hawthorne was featured in Who's Who in American Colleges & Universities and was on the National Dean's List during her last year of college. She is also a member of the Missouri Podiatric Medical Association. Dr. Hawthorne is board eligible with the American Board of Podiatric Surgeons. She is proficient in all aspects of foot and ankle medicine including diabetic foot care and conditions of the skin.

When she is not caring for her patients, Dr. Hawthorne is attending one of her children's sporting events, walking her Bernedoodle, or volunteering her time with many community organizations.

Medical School: Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine 1987

Residency: Mineral Area Regional Medical Center 1989

**Dr. Hawthorne is available at the following Offices:
Bridgeton, South County and St. Peters**



Upcoming News



- **New Electronic Medical Records System.** We are implementing a new EMR system into all 12 of our locations starting November 14. Please be patient with us as we transition into a new health records system in November and December. This will benefit all of us here at NextStep and you!
- **Short Staffed.** We are understaffed just like the rest of the world. Please be patient with our call center, medical assistants, doctors, and billing teams. Our average call hold time is 10-15 minutes. Please feel free to leave a message and we will return your call by the end of the next business day. Please be kind. We are doing our best!
- **Hiring!** Our company is on the move! We have doubled in size in 4 years and have aggressive growth plans in the future. You will find our work environment casual with a strong emphasis on teamwork. We have high standards for our employees; however, we also know how to have fun. Come join us by sending your resume to our HR Department at HR@footandankle-usa.com. We are currently seeking:
 - Certified Medical Assistants
 - Call Center Representatives
- **Upcoming Clinic Closures:**
 - November 24 – Thanksgiving
 - November 25 – Day after Thanksgiving
 - December 26 – Christmas Day Observed
 - January 2 – New Year's Day Observed