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## Your Toes & The Cold

It is cold out here in the St. Louis/metropolitan areas! Along with the snow and ice, the below freezing temperatures impacts our bodies, especially if you work outdoors. With the prolonged exposure to the low temperatures, your feet is the first to feel the uncomfortable effects. To keep our bodies temperatures balanced, the blood vessels in our arms and legs constrict. This means the vessels become narrow and cause less consistent blood flow to our feet and hands. That is why our feet are one of the first parts of our body to get cold when temperatures are low. There are four critical conditions to the foot that can occur to people who work outside for prolong periods of time. These conditions range from mild to severe. In some cases, the more serious problems may require amputation or rehabilitation.

### FROSTNIP

Frostnip can be defined as a mild form of frostbite. It occurs after minor exposure in below freezing temperatures. No actual freezing of the tissues occurs, resulting in no permanent damage to the feet. Typically, the symptoms of frostnip include minor prickly pain and skin color change to white or red. If you ever encounter frostbite, the solution for treatment is easy. Simply warm your skin with a warm towel.



## FROSTBITE

Frostbite is a step further than Frostnip. Frostbite occurs when a foot or other parts of the body is exposed to freezing temperatures under 32o F (0o C). Frostbite is described as the actual freezing of skin tissues that lead to various degrees of damage. There are four degrees of frostbite that determine the extent of severity of the burn.

1. First-Degree Frostbite – First degree is known for the early stages of frostbite. The stage following frostnip. Therefore, the symptoms are familiar to frostnip, including the change of color and minor sharp pain. Additionally, some other symptoms occur such as swelling, numbness which can lead to enhanced damage.
2. Second-Degree Frostbite – The second degree is extended damage from the first-degree and extends to the dermal layer to the skin and cause blistering.
3. Third-Degree Frostbite – The third-degree causes damage to the subcutaneous skin tissues, resulting in blisters to worsen and fill with blood.
4. Fourth-Degree Frostbite – Last, the fourth-degree is the most serious and damaging stage and could potentially result in amputation to the toes or the whole foot. This all depends on the extent of frostbite damage that has occurred. Treatment to save the toes and foot can be provided. For example; warming of the skin, wrapping the burns with dressing, pain medications, antibiotics, or whirlpool therapy.



## IMMERSION FOOT

Immersion foot is also widely know as trench foot, meaning prolonged exposure to cool, damp conditions. This condition is comparable to frostbite, however, Immersion occurs in nonfreezing temperatures. Immersion was nicknamed “trench foot” during World War I when army soldiers had to walk for miles in wet and mudded areas on foot. Symptoms of Immersion include whitening or redness of the skin, minor sharp pain, swelling, and blisters. If symptoms persist, it can cause long-term damage such us numb sensations, or neuropathy. Treatment for Trench Foot can include cleaning and drying your feet, soaking your feet in 105o F water for 10 minutes, and not sleeping with socks on.

## PERNIO

Pernio is another foot condition caused by temperatures, Pernio is also known as Chilblains. It is an inflammatory skin condition caused by over exposure to cold temperatures. It is the formation of bumps and patches on your hands or feet due to abnormal response of the blood vessels. The symptoms include the areas becoming itchy, puffy, and painful, even after the skin becomes warm. This condition is more known to occur in women, then to men. Pernio usually clears up within two to three weeks, however, it may reoccur for years. Treatment for Pernio involves heating pads and creams to relieve itching and inflammation.

It is extremely vital to recognize early signs to Frostnip, Frostbite, Immersion, and Pernio and to seek medical attention if needed. Ensuring you receive the proper medical treatment or even simple at home treatments can determine the extent of the condition.



## Employee December Birthdays:

- Abby, December 23
- Rae, December 23
- Jessica D, December 23





# Podiatrist Spotlight

## Jacob Lamb, DPM

As a board certified foot and ankle surgeon, Dr. Lamb is greatly experienced in all areas of podiatric care. Foot & ankle reconstructive surgery, sports medicine, and diabetic limb salvage are just a few of his specialties. Despite Dr. Lamb's proficiency at surgery, he emphasizes non-surgical treatment when possible. As the medical director of Next Step Foot and Ankle, he strives to give patients the best experience and coordinate the most effective patient care possible.

Dr. Lamb has been practicing podiatric medicine since 2006. He is actively involved with the DePaul Health Center residency training program, where he serves as a board member. He is a member of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery, serves on the Board of Missouri Podiatric Medical Association, American Podiatric Medical Association, and the American College of Podiatric Foot & Ankle Surgeons. Dr. Lamb is currently serving as the treasurer of the Missouri Podiatric Medical Association.

Residing in Creve Couer, Missouri, Dr. Lamb is an avid sports fan that enjoys participating in and watching sports. He also enjoys spending time with his family, friends, and two dogs, Tank and Chopper.

Medical School: Des Moines University-Osteopathic Medical Center 2003

Residency: Forest Park Hospital 2006

Board Certified: American Board of Podiatric Surgery since 2012

**Dr. Lamb is available for appointments at the following offices: Alton and South County**



# Upcoming News



- **New Electronic Medical Records System.** We have implemented a new EMR system into all 12 of our locations on November 14. Please be patient with us as we transition into a new health records system. 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](mailto:HR@footandankle-usa.com). We are currently seeking:
  - Certified Medical Assistants
  - Call Center Representatives
- **Upcoming Clinic Closures:**
  - December 26 – Christmas Day Observed
  - January 2 – New Year’s Day Observed