

Stretches for a Tight Achilles

Your Achilles tendon, which connects your heel bone to your calf muscles, is the largest tendon in your body. It's built to take a lot of force, but it's far from invincible.

An Achilles tendon that is tight or not properly warmed up can lead to trouble during activity. It can cause heel pain by pulling excessively on the heel bone, or it can become inflamed or rupture.

Warming up your Achilles tendons before activity is always a good idea, and especially so if you know yours can be a problem. Here are a few easy moves you can do to help stretch it out before you start picking up the pace.



As always, though, a stretch is not a cure for a problem that's causing consistent pain. If your heels are always aching, let us know!



About the Doctor

Matt Wettstein, DPM

Advanced Foot and Ankle is led by Dr. Matt Wettstein. Originally from Logan, UT, Dr. Wettstein completed his undergraduate studies at Utah State University before attending Des Moines University in the College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery. After graduating with top honors, he then completed his residency in Salt Lake City, UT. Dr. Wettstein is married and has four, wonderful, children.

Get Social w/Us



Standing Stretch

- Stand about an arm's length away from a wall (a large tree can work if you're outdoors).
- Lean forward and place both hands on the support, about a shoulder-width apart.
- Extend one foot back, heel flat against the ground. Your other foot should remain closer to the wall.
- Lean forward, pressing downward on your back heel with your knee slightly bent.
- Hold 30 seconds, then switch foot positions and repeat.

Towel Stretch

- Sit on the floor with legs extended outward.
- Place a towel beneath the balls of your feet, grasping an end of the towel in each hand.
- Sit up, with spine straight, and pull the towel gently toward you until you feel the stretch.
- Hold for 10-30 seconds, then release. Repeat 1-3 times.

When Your Feet Feel Aflame

It may be the time of year for passion, but hearts should feel afire—never your feet!

Burning pain in your feet can sometimes be the result of fatigue or an infection (such as athlete's foot). More often, however, it is sign of nerve damage of some sort. Peripheral neuropathy, often as a result of diabetes, can lead to a burning, tingling pain in the feet and toes.

Any type of painful sensation in the feet is not something to stand by on. If you have been experiencing a burning sensation after several days, and it has not improved with self-care, it is time to see us. You should also contact us if the burning is gradually becoming worse, seeming to spread, or starting to mix with numbness.

Call us or emergency care immediately if the burning came on hard and suddenly. While rare, this could be sign that you have been exposed to some kind of toxin.

You should also seek immediate help if the sensation accompanies an open wound that may be infected; especially if you have a history of diabetes.

If peripheral neuropathy is the cause of your burning, we have ways of helping you manage your symptoms to keep your nerves as healthy as possible. If another cause is at play, such as athlete's foot or other form of inflammation, we have effective treatments for those as well!



How to Make Better Fast Food Choices

In an ideal world, we'd have the time to prepare every meal we make. (And honestly, we likely have more time to do that than we're willing to admit.)

The reality, however, is that there are often times we're in a rush and need something fast. There is no shortage of clowns, colonels, and pig-tailed girls to supply this convenience, but it's often not to the benefit of our general diet.

Fast food happens. But when it does, there are some choices you can make to give your body a bit healthier of a meal—or at least a less unhealthy one.

- **Aim for 500 calories or less.** Calorie information is now easy to find on most fast food menus (or their websites), so don't take a guess on this. It's very easy to underestimate caloric intake at restaurants, when a drink can add well more than 200 alone!
- **Opt for the smallest sizes.** Just because a portion comes as part of a meal does not mean it is a reasonable portion. This is especially true with sides such as fries. The children's menu may be a place to dip if you know it will satisfy you.
- **Focus on the grilled and lean stuff.** Fried items contain a lot more fat than needed. Try to stay away from crispy chicken and fish patties, and opt more for grilled skinless chicken and lean roast beef.
- **Customize.** Don't forget that you often have options in the preparation of your food. This can include substituting salad for fries, serving sauces on the side, and simply removing fried add-ons altogether.



Walnut-Rosemary Crusted Salmon

This recipe is a fantastic source of omega-3 fatty acids, with only 222 calories and 4 grams of carbs per 3 oz. serving.

Ingredients

- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp. lemon zest
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary
- ½ tsp. honey
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper
- 3 Tbsp. panko breadcrumbs
- 3 Tbsp. finely chopped walnuts
- 1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 pound of skinless salmon filet (fresh or frozen)
- olive oil cooking spray

Preparation

- Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Combine mustard, garlic, lemon zest, lemon juice, rosemary, honey, salt, and crushed red pepper in a small bowl. In a separate small bowl, combine panko, walnuts, and oil.
- Place salmon on the baking sheet. Spread the mustard mixture over the fish and sprinkle with the panko mixture. Press it in a bit to make it stick. Lightly coat with cooking spray.
- Bake fish until it flakes easily with a fork, usually 8-12 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish.

ADVANCED FOOT & ANKLE

176 Falls Ave, Ste 200, Twin Falls, ID 83301
208-731-6321

1263 Bennett Ave, Burley, ID 83318
208-312-4646

www.idahofoot.com



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Avoiding Ingrown Toenails

A painful, swollen ingrown toenail has its way of interfering with an otherwise good day. While they are often mild enough to be treated effectively at home, it's a much better idea to prevent yourself from getting them in the first place!

There are several mistakes people can make that increase the risk of a toenail becoming ingrown. By changing your ways, you might be able to stave off ingrown toenails much more often.

- **Trim your nails properly.** Many people tend to trim their toenails far too short and curved, which can train nails to grow into the skin. Cuts to a toenail should leave a little white at the end and be relatively straight across.
- **Protect your toes.** Trauma to toenails can cause them to become ingrown as well. Make sure your footwear properly protects your toes against injury, whether from dropping something heavy on your foot or repeatedly slamming your toes up against the fronts of your shoes while running.
- **But give them room.** Shoes that don't provide enough toe box room will crowd your toes together, creating an environment ripe for ingrown toenails. If your child or teen gets ingrown toenails often, this might be the cause. Their feet may be outgrowing their shoes too quickly!

If you've tried the above advice but your ingrown toenails keep coming back, don't blame yourself. In some cases, a person's toenails are more naturally inclined to become ingrown due to heredity. If this is the case, let us know whether ingrown toenails are a persistent problem. We can help!

