

## When Cold Feet Isn't Just Nerves

People often talk about cold feet in terms of walking down the aisle or engaging in a stressful event, but what's going on when your feet just feel cold for seemingly no reason?

Many causes of cold feet are nothing to worry about, but others can be sign of an underlying problem. It pays to talk with a podiatrist about your condition if it keeps returning or causes you concerns for other reasons.



### 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.

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Among the most common causes of cold feet is poor circulation. The feet, being far from your heart, already have a bigger challenge receiving warm blood flow. If a condition is causing your general circulation to be slower, your feet will be among the first to feel it.

A potential cause of interrupted circulation is Raynaud's phenomenon which causes blood vessels in the hands and/or feet to suddenly constrict and spasm, reducing blood flow. While sometimes associated with another condition, Raynaud's phenomenon can also happen entirely on its own to an otherwise healthy person. Also, in some cases, certain medications can mimic this effect.

If you are sensing cold, but your feet don't actually feel cold to the touch, that may be the sign that something is amiss neurologically. The nerves that sense temperature may not be operating as they should and damaged in some way (neuropathy). If that cold feeling also comes with tingling or numbness, the odds of a nerve problem become even more likely.

Don't get cold feet about asking us whenever something in your feet or ankles doesn't feel as it should. We'd rather know and find out nothing's wrong than let something potentially treatable go under the radar!



# Keep Diabetes from Destroying Your Feet



November is the month of thankfulness, but it's also a month of awareness.

In Diabetes Awareness Month, we pay a little extra attention to the effects of this condition on the body—especially the feet. We say “a little extra” because diabetes doesn’t wait for a special month to become a serious factor in someone’s life. Awareness is a 365-day-a-year battle!

## **What Makes Diabetes So Bad for the Feet?**

Our feet have a heavy reliance on circulation and sensation in order to perform their jobs well. Unfortunately, diabetes can throw a wrench in both of these things.

As the condition causes damage within our circulatory system, the ability of nerves in our feet to receive the oxygen and nourishment they need from the blood is reduced. The nerves themselves can become damaged over time, ultimately leading to numbness in the feet.

In this state, not only can an injury to the foot go unnoticed, but circulation can be poor as to not provide the cells enough of the tools they need to heal. Even a small cut can grow worse as it continues to be walked on, eventually turning into an ulcer and becoming infected. From there, the dangers can and do become life-threatening!

## **Keep an Eye on Your Feet**

If you have diabetes, a daily foot inspection is crucial to your health. Look and feel along your feet for any signs of injury, discoloration—anything out of the ordinary. If you do find something that doesn’t clear up in a couple days or so, give us a call right away!

Do not be afraid to employ the help of a loved one if you can’t access the whole of your foot. Tools such as mirrors and selfie sticks can also be useful. We can help you figure out a plan that is best and most convenient for you.



# Does Too Much Screen Time Hurt Your Child's Attention Span?

We don't have to tell you how much electronic entertainment has permeated our culture. Cell phones, tablets, TVs, and video games all provide plenty of opportunities for a child to sit and get glued.

This isn't always a bad thing. In many instances, educational apps and shows can help a child's brain development and communication skills. They can also help a parent's mental health sometimes by giving you a much needed break!

That said, studies are pointing toward consequences for spending too much screen time per day or starting kids on screens at too early an age. Engaging in too much screen time too young can actually impede brain development, especially when it comes to focus, concentration, and empathy.

Birth to age 3 is considered a "critical period" in brain development. Our neural networks develop as we are exposed to certain stimuli that naturally occur around us. Screens provide plenty of stimuli, but it's not the right kind. It is too overwhelming at this point in our lives. All of this stimuli is fed to us without giving us the opportunity to process what we are hearing, seeing, and feeling.

Psychologists recommend allowing limited screen time only after age 2. This should be kept to an hour utilizing software that will help your child learn and develop. Keep the real world open to your children; it's a much better developmental tool.



## Maple Cranberry Sauce

Cranberry sauce tends to be a holiday favorite. Give it a sweet twist with the use of maple syrup, orange, and cinnamon. No canned stuff here!

### Ingredients

- 1 bag of fresh or frozen cranberries, 12 oz.
- ½ c. pure maple syrup
- Zest of 1 orange
- Juice of 1 medium orange (about 2 oz. or 4 Tbsp.)
- ¼ c. water
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon

### Preparation

- Rinse the cranberries with cold water in a colander. Remove and toss any shriveled or damaged cranberries.
- Combine the cranberries, maple syrup, orange zest, orange juice, and water in a medium saucepan.
- Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then reduce to a simmer, stirring occasionally until a compote has formed (usually about 20 minutes). Do not worry if the cranberries pop—this is normal.
- Remove the cranberry sauce from heat and stir in the cinnamon. Let it thicken and cool completely at room temperature, then transfer to a bowl and chill in the refrigerator. Sauce will keep for up to 2 weeks and can be made in advance.



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[See page one.](#)

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## Tips for Relieving Rheumatoid Arthritis Pain

The pain of rheumatoid arthritis can feel like a conqueror over your feet. Swollen joints, big toe pain, aching movement. About 9 out of 10 people with rheumatoid arthritis have some form of pain in this area.

In some cases, custom orthotics, pain medications, and even surgery can make a big difference in a patient's comfort level. Here are some other ways that might also help manage the pain of rheumatoid arthritis in the feet:

- **Change your footwear.** Different shoes can shift pain points in the feet in different ways. A shoe that is comfortable to your condition, or accommodative to orthotics, should be something you will actually want to wear for a variety of occasions.
- **Don't stand for too long.** Staying on your feet all day can be especially painful. Try to schedule your activities out as best you can to give you intermittent periods of standing and sitting.
- **Try heat and cold therapies.** These can include hot baths, foot massages, and icing. Find what works best for you and stick with it.

If your attempts to relieve your arthritis pain have not been panning out well, we are here to help! Please don't hesitate to bring your concerns up with us.

