

# Foot Injuries Can Be Crushing

Feet struck by heavy, falling objects; run over by a car or agricultural/ industrial machinery; or injured in an auto accident often experience major crush injuries. Fractures, lacerations, mangled tissue, and nerve damage are frequently involved, along with pain, swelling, and sometimes numbness.

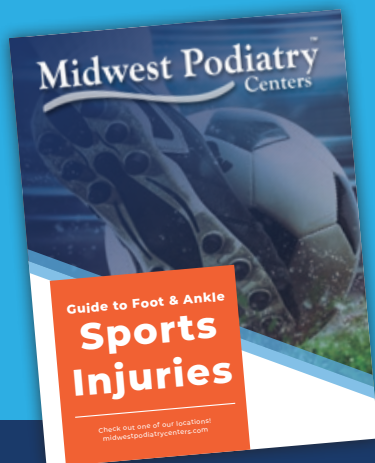
Crush injuries of the foot should be treated immediately by a podiatrist, or at the ER if after hours (but ask for a podiatrist). Not only do the above-mentioned effects need to be addressed, but the area will be assessed for acute compartment syndrome, a dangerous condition in which internal bleeding and/or swelling cause pressure to build between foot muscles and their surrounding sheaths. The pressure buildup can cut off circulation, resulting in severe, permanent tissue damage and sometimes death. If acute compartment syndrome is evident, emergency surgery will be performed.

It may take several hours to a couple of days for acute compartment syndrome to develop. You will be given instructions to return to our office or the hospital if you experience the following:

- intensified pain
- numbness or a pins-and-needles sensation
- tightness, increased swelling, or bruising
- new pain that feels like a deep ache in the affected area

In some cases, a crush injury might be relatively minor — such as dropping a moderately heavy book on your foot — meaning there is only superficial tissue damage, little pain, and perhaps light bruising. This injury may heal on its own through rest, icing, compression, and elevation (RICE), but it should be checked out at our office anyway. For example, a fracture may lurk behind a bruise. Don't self-diagnose.

Crush injuries are serious business. If you experience one, contact our office immediately.



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# A 'Plantar Plate Tear' Sounds Rather Unpleasant

A plantar plate tear is a significant injury to the ball of the foot that is commonly mistaken for other conditions. An early and accurate diagnosis is key to preventing it from becoming a chronic issue and creating other problems.

Plantar plates are ligaments that hold the metatarsophalangeal (MTP) joints in place. Each foot has five MTP joints — they are the middlemen for the toes and the metatarsal bones (five long bones along the top of the foot). However, only the four lesser toes have plantar plates.

The plantar plates are responsible for keeping the toes contained in the MTP joints, which is especially critical when the toes bend and push off while walking or running, and then return to a straightened position. When a plantar plate stretches or tears, pain and swelling follow in the ball of the foot and extend to the toe; pain may be more prominent if you bend the toe upward; and the affected toe may “pop up” or drift to the side and form a “V” shape with a neighboring toe. The second toe is the most vulnerable to plantar-plate injury.

The following factors contribute to these injuries:

- Bunions can cause abnormal, repetitive stress on the plantar plate of the second toe.
- Excessive pronation, high-heeled shoes, and playing certain sports ripen the chances of plantar-plate dysfunction.
- A single traumatic event can disrupt the plantar plate.

Untreated plantar-plate injuries can lead to increased pain, hammertoes, and arthritis. In early stages, conservative measures are highly successful. Delayed treatment may lead to surgery and six weeks in a walking boot. The choice seems obvious ... our office stands ready to help.

## Don't Skip These Spring Training Tips



We've got news for you: the off-season is over. Time to pull on the shorts, strap on the shoes and get out there and start training. Whether you want to run a 5k, be the best pitcher on your co-ed softball team, or test yourself in a triathlon, here's a little tip: start slow!

Many of us jump into a training routine with full force, anxious to get in shape and achieve our goals, but doing too much too soon can actually sideline your dreams. In order to avoid injury, it's essential that you gradually build the intensity and duration of your workouts, so your muscles are able to slowly adjust and you don't place too much stress on your bones.

It's also a good idea to cross-train—incorporating low impact activities decreases your risk of overuse issues. You should always warm up prior to activity, too, even if you just do a little walking or a few jumping jacks. In the same way, make sure to cool down with some stretches afterward.

If you do start noticing aches and pains, remember: resting a little now could save you from having to completely throw in the towel later. For more tips, feel free to ask our helpful staff. Let the training begin!





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## Fun Foot Facts

- Each foot has 26 bones – both feet contain nearly one quarter of all the bones (206) of the body.
- Each foot is made up of an intricate network of over 100 tendons, ligaments, and muscles.
- Every step places 1.5 times your body weight of pressure on your foot (a 150-pound person places 225 pounds of pressure on the foot with every step).
- The average person walks 5,000 to 7,000 steps a day.
- The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) estimates that the average person will walk nearly 100,000 miles in a lifetime, between three to four times the earth's circumference.



# Caramel Cheesecake Brownies ... from Scratch

Yield: 9 brownies; Prep time: 10 minutes; Cook time: 40 minutes

*An indulgent treat that Mom will appreciate!*

### Cheesecake Filling Ingredients:

- 4 ounces cream cheese
- ½ cup mascarpone
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

### Brownie Batter Ingredients:

- ⅔ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon instant espresso powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 ounces dark chocolate chips
- 2 ounces caramel chips
- ½ cup unsalted butter, cubed
- 1¼ cups sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Cheesecake Filling Instructions:

Place cream cheese in a microwave-safe bowl, then heat for 30 seconds until easily spreadable. Add the mascarpone, sugar, and flour, then whisk to combine. Set aside.

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 325° and place rack in the middle position. Line an 8" x 8" baking pan with aluminum foil, then spray well with nonstick baking spray.
2. Whisk together flour, espresso powder, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.
3. Combine chocolate and caramel chips with butter in a bowl, then microwave in 30-second increments until completely melted, stirring after each interval.
4. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together sugar, eggs, and vanilla. Add the chocolate-caramel mixture, then whisk until smooth. Add flour mixture and fold until just combined.
5. Pour all except 1/2 cup of the brownie batter into the prepared pan. Top with cream cheese filling, and spread evenly along the top.
6. Dollop the remaining brownie batter on top, then use the edge of a knife to swirl batter into cream cheese.
7. Bake for 40 minutes, or until toothpick or cake tester inserted into the brownies comes out clean. Let cool in pan for 1 hour. Cut into 9 equal squares.

Recipe courtesy of [www.aheadofthyme.com](http://www.aheadofthyme.com).



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## Keep Feet and Ankles Healthy While Gardening

According to the National Gardening Association, roughly 25 percent of American households are engaged in gardening, whether at home or at a community garden. Gardening is an excellent outdoor activity, but be mindful of your feet and ankles.

Before getting down to horticultural business, do some lower-extremity stretching (and upper). It can lower the odds of aches, strains, and stiffness the next day. Gardening involves a lot of bending, squatting, extending, and lifting.

Never go barefoot, and avoid wearing flip-flops or sandals. Feet will be susceptible to puncture wounds from stepping on a gardening tool, thorns, nails, sharp stones, etc. In addition, there's no protection against miserable toe stubs, which sometimes fracture bones or damage ligaments. Preexisting conditions like plantar fasciitis, tendonitis, and arthritis can be exacerbated, too. Barefoot gardeners are also vulnerable to a host of bacteria and viruses found in soil that can enter cracks in the soles of the feet and stir up trouble.

Wear durable, supportive shoes, such as sneakers or boots, to minimize the risk of puncture wounds and to provide ankle support while walking on uneven garden ground. Speaking of which, in order to avoid ankle sprains and fractures, keep your eyes peeled for holes dug by pesky critters that might not be immediately obvious.

Water intake plays a key role as well. Proper hydration while gardening can help prevent cramping and reduce swelling in the feet and lower legs.

If gardening takes a toll on your feet and ankles, schedule an appointment with our office. We'll help them to blossom once again.

