



# RIPEPI FOOT & ANKLE CLINICS

Alleviating Foot & Ankle Pain

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News and Updates **December 2022**



## Don't Let Gout Ruin Your Holidays

The holidays are known for delectable food and drink. But if they're brimming with purines, overindulgence can lead to gout, a form of arthritis marked by flare-ups of extreme pain lasting for days or weeks.

Purines are chemical compounds found in all plants and animals in varying degrees. The body converts them into uric acid, which is filtered out of the bloodstream by the kidneys. But when there's an overload of uric acid, it can accumulate in the joints, crystallize, and stab like daggers.

Men are much more likely to sustain gout attacks than women. Other risk factors include obesity, hypertension, kidney dysfunction, and taking certain medications.

The big-toe joint is the most common target of gout — it's the coolest part of the body, and uric acid is very sensitive to temperature changes (i.e., crystallization) — but no joints are exempt. Gout symptoms include sudden onset of intense pain — often in the middle of the night — redness, swelling, warmth, and extreme sensitivity.

To prevent gout flare-ups, avoid the following purine-rich foods (or partake in moderation):

- Shellfish (shrimp, crab, etc.), salmon, scallops, sardines, organ meats (e.g., liver or kidney), and red meat.
- Alcohol, especially beer, which also interferes with the body's ability to process and eliminate uric acid.
- Foods high in sugar, especially high-fructose corn syrup.
- High-sodium foods. Sodium doesn't contribute purines but can cause dehydration, which raises uric-acid levels.

Drink plenty of water and try to manage holiday stress. Stress affects our body chemistry in a way that elevates uric-acid levels.

If you experience gout over the holidays, contact our office. If treated promptly with lifestyle changes and medication, gout typically can be well managed. If it's ignored, chronic pain and eventual joint destruction are possible.

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# This Winter, Prepare Your Feet for Summer

Ten percent of Americans have toenail fungus, an unsightly, annoying, and sometimes underestimated condition. Funguses thrive in warm, moist environments (showers, locker rooms, poolside, sweaty shoes, etc.). As we age, our immune systems weaken and toenails also become more brittle and subject to cracks, providing added opportunity for fungal infections.

Frequently, the first sign of toenail fungus is a whitish or yellowish spot beneath the nail surface. If ignored, the situation can progress to nail discoloration, thickening, shape distortion, an odor most foul, and pain that makes walking a chore.

Unattended toenail fungus can also spread to neighboring nails and skin. It's an even more concerning condition for those with diabetes, circulatory issues, and immune disorders.

Some people try to hide fungal nails under polish. "Out of sight, out of mind" doesn't solve anything. The problem will just worsen as the fungus becomes more deeply entrenched in the nail layers. Over-the-counter medications are useless for advanced cases.

Your best game plan is to schedule an appointment with our office. Once we evaluate your nail(s) and confirm a diagnosis of toenail fungus, we will help you devise a treatment plan. Oral medications, medicated polishes and creams, and laser therapy are tools at our disposal. In advanced cases, the nail may need to be removed.

Achieving the desired result isn't instantaneous. For example, oral medication may need to be taken for six to 12 weeks. Laser therapy might require several sessions scheduled about a month apart. The healed nail will also need to completely grow out to reach full cosmetic effect — typically six months to a year.

Warm weather heralds the arrival of sandal and open-toed shoe season. Start getting ready *now*.

## Mark Your Calendars

- Dec. 4** Santa's List Day: If Santa's naughty/nice list is only made on Dec. 4, the elves deserve a raise.
- Dec. 7** Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day: The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor a second time on March 4, 1942, unsuccessfully.
- Dec. 18** Hanukkah (begins sundown): To commemorate the miracle oil burning for eight nights, many Hanukkah foods are fried in oil.
- Dec. 21** Winter Solstice: Occurs the instant the North Pole is farthest from the sun (4:48 p.m. this year).
- Dec. 23** Festivus: Nothing says holiday like a plain aluminum pole, airing of grievances, dinner, and feats of strength.
- Dec. 25** Christmas: The Friday and Saturday before Christmas are busier shopping days than Black Friday.
- Dec. 31** New Year's Eve: The Times Square ball weighs nearly six tons.



# Roast Pork and Sweet Potatoes with Spicy Cabbage

Yield: 4 servings; prep time: 10 min.; cook time: 45 min.; total time: 55 min.

*This impressive pork tenderloin dinner is surprisingly simple to make.*

## Ingredients

- 2½ lb. sweet potatoes, cut into ½-inch chunks
- 2 tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1 pork tenderloin (1¼ lb.)
- ¼ c. barbecue sauce
- ½ medium head red cabbage, thinly sliced
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 jalapeño, thinly sliced
- ¼ c. cider vinegar

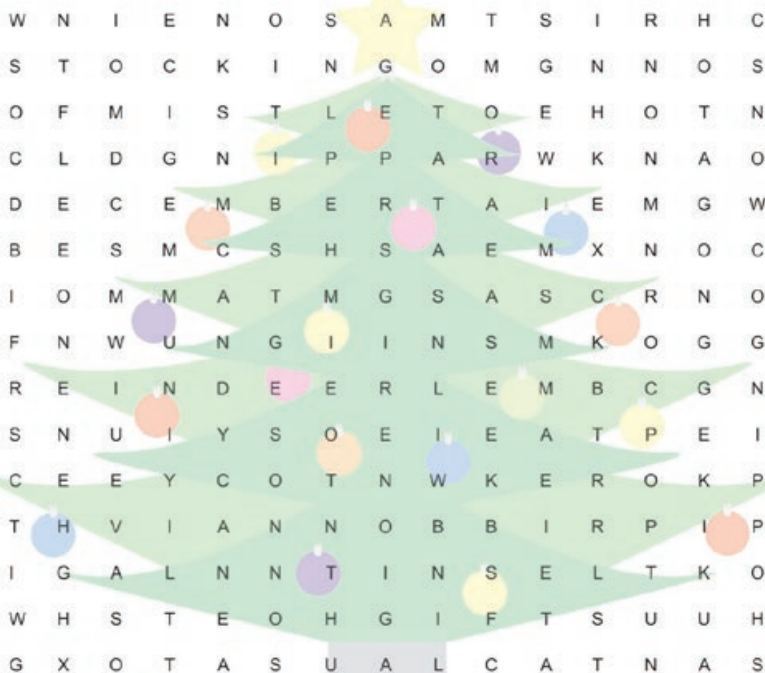
## Directions

1. On large, rimmed baking sheet, toss sweet potatoes with 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1/4 teaspoon salt; roast in a 450°F oven for 30 minutes.
2. In deep 12-inch skillet, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil on medium-high. Season pork tenderloin with 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Brown pork on all sides; transfer to baking sheet with potatoes. Brush pork with barbecue sauce; roast 16 minutes or until cooked through (145°F).
3. To same skillet on medium, add red cabbage, green onions, jalapeño, and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Cook 12 minutes or until cabbage is tender, stirring. Stir in cider vinegar.
4. Serve pork with potatoes and cabbage.

Recipe courtesy of [www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes](http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes).



## Christmas <sup>Word Search</sup>



Find these words:

- |            |           |             |          |
|------------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| Bow        | Eggnog    | Popcorn     | Snow     |
| Candy Cane | Elves     | Reindeer    | Stocking |
| Christmas  | Gifts     | Ribbon      | Tinsel   |
| Cookies    | Mistletoe | Santa Claus | Tree     |
| December   | Ornaments | Shopping    | Wrapping |



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# When Your Child Has a Lot on Their Plate

All growing children have growth plates — soft areas of cartilage where new bone growth occurs, typically at the ends of long bones (i.e., arms, legs, feet). One such area where growth plates reside, and trouble sometimes springs up, is the forefoot.

The metatarsal bones, the long ones running along the top of the foot, connect with the toes. Sometimes repetitive stress causes microfractures in the metatarsals at the growth plates. Circulation to the bone is impeded, and cellular death occurs in the head of the bone. This condition is known as Freiberg's disease. Although it's not common, it's still a pain in the ... foot for kids to deal with.

The second metatarsal is most susceptible, and in some patients that's because their second toe is longer than their big toe, bearing more weight and absorbing more shock than normal. For reasons as yet unclear, young girls are over three times as susceptible to Freiberg's as boys.

The calling cards of Freiberg's are pain and discomfort in the forefoot, swelling, and stiffness in the joint (metatarsophalangeal joint), which may cause a noticeable limp. The RICE method (Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation) may help initially, but symptoms will eventually intensify and become more persistent without professional care.

If your child is dealing with forefoot pain, contact our office. If we diagnose Freiberg's disease, conservative treatments are highly effective and may include a combination of immobilization (boot or cast), medication for inflammation and pain, metatarsal pads, physical therapy, orthotics, and properly fitting shoes with a wide toe box. Left untreated, Freiberg's can eventually cause arthritis and might require surgery.

