



# FOOT SENSE

A monthly newsletter from your podiatrist



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## How to Prevent Foot and Ankle Injuries In Pickleball

Have you or your friends recently jumped on the pickleball bandwagon? If so, you're not alone. Invented right here on Bainbridge Island by former U.S Representative Joel Prichard, pickleball has taken the U.S. by storm.



According to the Sports and Fitness Industry Association it's our fastest growing sport, growing an average of 11.5% per year in the past 5 years with over 4.8 million players nationwide.

Although pickleball may require less running after balls because it requires smaller courts, it can still take a toll on a player's feet and ankles. According to one study in 2018, the annual number of senior pickleball injuries reached the same level as senior tennis injuries in that year.

It's not surprising. Just like tennis there is repetitive pounding on a hard court which can cause problems such as Achilles tendonitis and heel pain. Then there's the rapid side-to-side movements and quick changes in direction which can lead to ankle sprains and other lower extremity injuries.

Here are the major pickleball foot and ankle injuries you may encounter, how they're treated, and how to prevent them.

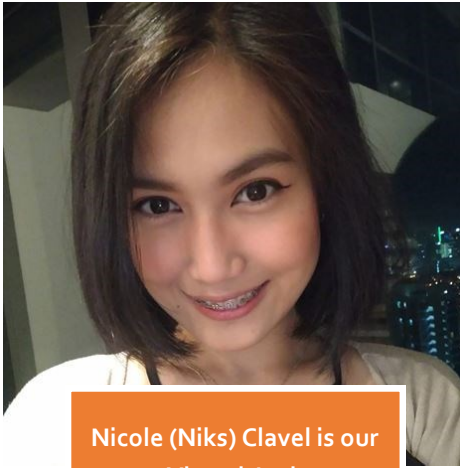
Continued on page 3

### Inside this Issue:

- Foot and Ankle Center photos—2
- Ovened Baked Frittata With Veggies—2
- How to Prevent Foot and Ankle Injuries in Pickleball (continued)—3
- Best Shoes for Walking At Art, Music Festivals, and Street Fairs—4
- Get This Newsletter Delivered to Your Inbox —4

**Redi-thotics Semi-Rigid  
for Pickleball Play  
\$50**





Nicole (Niks) Clavel is our  
new Virtual Assistant



Sprucing up the office just for  
you!

## Ovened Baked Frittata With Veggies

Frittatas are an easy, tasty dish to prepare any time and they're also perfect for Easter and Passover since they're made from eggs (representing Spring and renewal) and they are free of grain (good for Passover). While you can use any combination of vegetables and cheeses you desire, we thought this would be an excellent combination for our patients.

- 12 eggs, whisked just until the egg yolks and whites are blended
- 1 cup of full-fat dairy (milk or any milk alternative like creamy oat milk, sour cream, or yogurt)
- 1-2 cups of cheese of any type (feta, mozzarella, cheddar)
- 2 cups of broccoli
- 1 onion
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 cup of mushrooms
- 1-2 cups spinach
- 1-2 cloves garlic
- 1-2 tsps of your favorite seasoning (i.e. pepper, basil, oregano, thyme)
- 1-2 tbsp olive oil



Source:

[Adapted from Feasting At Home](#)

Steam broccoli until tender and saute all vegetables (with the exception of the spinach) with the spices in olive oil. While veggies are cooking whisk the eggs with the dairy.

Assemble the frittata using a 9" X 13" greased pan. Pour half the egg mixture in, add the cooked veggies, add the spinach and cheese, and then pour in the remaining egg mixture swirling it all together to make sure everything is incorporated.

Bake at 350 for 1 hour. Check at 30-40 minutes and tent with foil if getting too dark. You'll know frittata is done with it puffs slightly at the very center and is not too wobbly.

Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

## Ankle Sprains

One of the more common injuries in pickleball are ankle sprains. They occur due to the movements needed to play the sport. Symptoms of an ankle sprain are sudden pain with difficulty bearing weight. Signs can include swelling, pain, and bruising.

Ankle sprains need to be treated so a small problem doesn't become worse later. Chronic ankle pain can result from insufficiently treated sprains.



Initially, injured players should apply the principles of RICE which stands for rest, ice, compression, and elevation. This can help reduce swelling, inflammation, and pain. It's important to see a podiatrist to get an X-ray or MRI to find out if there is more extensive damage and to get it treated.

## Plantar Fasciitis

Plantar fasciitis or heel pain is one of the most common conditions found in people who play pickleball. Many other factors also increase the risk of developing this condition including poor foot mechanics, tight calf muscles, overweight, wearing non-supportive shoes, and being older.

To treat it, pickleball players who experience heel pain, should refrain from playing. In addition to rest, most people will need help with reduction of inflammation, get fitted for custom orthotics, stretching exercises, buy supportive shoes, and sometimes physical therapy.

## Achilles Tendonitis

Achilles tendonitis is a chronic condition that develops as a result of repetitive stress to the Achilles tendon. Many of the factors involved in development of plantar fasciitis can also bring on Achilles tendonitis. Athletes who take certain antibiotics or have high blood pressure are also at greater risk.

Achilles tendonitis can begin with mild pain on the back of the heel to just below the calf muscle but can gradually worsen over time.

Treatment for this condition is virtually the same as that for plantar fasciitis. Without adequate treatment this condition can progress to Achilles tendonosis, a degenerative disorder which can require surgery or injections to heal.

## Achilles Tendon Rupture

An Achilles tendon rupture can occur when the tendon is stretched beyond its capacity. This can occur with the twisting and rapid movements found in pickleball. Older players who only play on occasion are most at risk as well those who take certain medications such as steroids and some antibiotics. These can weaken the tendon making it more likely to rupture.

## Stress Fracture

Stress fractures are small cracks in the bone caused by engaging in sports like pickleball. Athletes who ramp up their play too quickly, women who are post-menopausal or women who are underweight are also at greater risk for this condition.

Symptoms can include:

- Pain that comes on quickly in the foot or ankle that's relieved by rest
- Pain, swelling, redness, or bruising at the top of the foot or ankle

Rest and immobilization of the foot for six weeks is the usual treatment.

Scan this QR code to learn more about preventing pickleball injuries.



## Best Shoes for Walking At Art, Music Festivals, and Street Fairs

Spring is here and pretty soon many of us will be headed to our local arts festival, music festival or street fair. Whether it's the Edmonds Art festival, the Wallingford Street Fair, or Folklife you'll likely be putting in lots of steps. And possibly more than you usually do.

If you're already a long distance walker and your feet never cause you any pain, you can probably skip this article. But for those of you who just stroll around your neighborhood on occasion, you'll want to listen up. Putting in more miles than usual can cause a lot of strain on your feet and can lead to foot pain. In addition, if you've had foot pain in the past, your feet are flat or high arched, and you've got some years on you you're much more likely to leave that festival with unhappy feet.



Fortunately, your shoes also play a huge role in helping prevent foot pain. If you have any of the risks named above, it's very important to wear shoes that provide you with lot's of support. Like a tennis shoe with arch support that you can't easily bend in half or twist from side to side. You can wear sandals as long as they meet the same requirement.

Avoid these shoes:

- Flip flops
- Sandals with no strap
- Slides
- Tight shoes
- Narrow shoes
- High heels
- Flats

For more ideas about how to resolve painful shoes problems in women scan this QR code.



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—*Dr. Rion Berg*

To make an appointment, call us at 206-368-7000.

