

Comprehensive care for diabetic feet

“My wife, Dorothy, and I are fortunate enough to spend our winters in sunny Florida,” beams John Shey, a retired Rhode Island deputy sheriff. “It was important to me to find a local podiatrist because I’m diabetic, and I was referred to Dr. Starrett.”

Clare H. Starrett, DPM, is a board-certified podiatrist with offices in Bradenton and on Anna Maria Island.

“Dr. Starrett has been on top of the situation ever since I first went to see him,” says John. “I play golf as often as I can, sometimes five times a week, and without a skillful podiatrist taking care of my feet I wouldn’t be able to do that. She’s very thorough, employing different devices and preventive measures to keep my feet in good golfing condition.”

“John frequently develops corns and calluses in different places on his feet,” affirms Dr. Starrett. “Because they are usually the precursors to ulcers — a round or circular opening in the skin — John comes in to see me as soon as they develop, and we remove them within just a few minutes. It’s a painless procedure, so it does not require anesthesia.”

If an ulcer does erupt, Dr.

Starrett might recommend what are called *healing sandals*.

“The insoles of healing sandals are made up of small, octagonal-shaped pieces of foam that can pop out, creating a space for the ulcer to rest,” explains Dr. Starrett. “They allow patients to walk while the sores heal.



Island Podiatry

Clare H. Starrett, DPM

A nonhealing wound requires medical attention.

If you have a scratch, scrape, or injury that does not heal within one month, wait no longer. Seek medical attention.

Prevention and early intervention

According to Dr. Starrett, diabetes can contribute to foot problems in two ways: by decreasing circulation to the feet and by decreasing sensations in the feet. “We tell our patients to check their feet every day,” counsels Dr. Starrett, “because they can incur injuries and not even realize it.”

“My wife checks the bottoms of my feet every day,” confides John. “One time, I had just gotten back down to Florida when I realized I had a problem on the

end of one of my toes.”

“John’s toe was contracted in such a way that he was getting significant pressure at the tip of it,” explains Dr. Starrett. “By performing just a minor surgical procedure called a *capsulotomy*, we allowed the toe to straighten out; therefore, the ulcer healed on its own.”

“It only took one stitch,” observes John. “I walked out of her office and went right back to my daily tasks.”

“Some people get calluses under bony prominences, which means there is too much pressure in that area. Because John has had recurrent ulcers over the years, I wanted to see if orthotics would be appropriate for him.

“We gave him a pair of insoles made of thermoplastic, which uses the body’s heat to mold the insole to the shape of the foot. When we saw that they provided substantial relief, we proceeded with ordering him the custom-molded orthotics.”

“Dr. Starrett made impressions of my feet in plaster,” recounts John. The molds were then sent to a laboratory where insoles were fabricated to fit John’s shoes and his feet.

“By using the specially fabricated orthotics,” explains the doctor, “the patient’s foot makes full contact with the plantar surface [the bottom surface of the foot], evening out the pressure and reducing the chance for calluses, blisters, and ulcers.”

“Ultimately, early intervention and prevention are the keys to keeping a handle on ulcers for diabetics,” prescribes Dr. Starrett. **FHCN**—Kris Kline

Are you experiencing foot pain?

If you are diabetic, or if you are experiencing foot pain, call Dr. Starrett. She welcomes questions regarding all aspects of foot care or podiatric procedures. Dr. Starrett maintains offices at 2722 Manatee Ave. West in Bradenton and at 104 Crescent Dr. on Anna Maria Island. For further information or to schedule an appointment, phone (941) 779-1100.



Clare H. Starrett, DPM, is a board-certified podiatrist, a fellow of the American College of Foot Orthopedics and Podiatric Medicine, and an associate of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgery. She received her undergraduate degree from Rutgers University and graduated from Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine, Philadelphia, PA, where she later served on the faculty and as department chair of Podiatric Orthopedics. Dr. Starrett completed her surgical residency at Metropolitan Hospital, Philadelphia. She is the former director of clinical services for the Foot & Ankle Institute, Philadelphia, and has lectured on foot orthopedics at major universities in the United States and Spain.



Early intervention and preventive measures are helping John protect his feet.

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