Common Foot Injuries & Treatment

**Blisters**
- A blister is a bubble on the skin filled with serum caused by friction in the area.
- It is common to want to "pop" blisters and remove the skin -- this can cause infection and delayed healing.

**Treatment**
- If blister isn't painful, leave it intact. Cover with second skin and a bandage or a blister bandage.
- Keep covering in place with Leukotape and adhesive spray.
- If blister is causing pain, you can drain the fluid following these steps:
  1) Wash your hands and the blister with soap and warm water.
  2) Swab the blister with iodine.
  3) Sterilize a clean, sharp needle by wiping it with rubbing alcohol.
  4) Use the needle to puncture the blister. Aim for several spots near the blister's edge. Let the fluid drain, but leave the overlying skin in place.
  5) Apply ointment or second skin to the blister and cover it with a bandage.
  6) Change the dressing every day.
- If blister doesn't heal or becomes more painful, red, or hot to the touch - make an appointment to be seen by a healthcare provider.

**Bunions**
- A bunion is a bony bump that forms on the joint at the base of your big toe. It forms when your big toe pushes against your next toe, forcing the joint of your big toe to get bigger and stick out. The skin over the bunion might be red and sore.

**Treatment**
It is hard to reverse a bunion once it has formed, however, there are ways to manage the pain associated with bunions.
- Create more space between your 1st and 2nd toe, an inverted cosmetic wedge works well. This helps align the joint and relieve pressure.
- Tape can also be used to align the joint. This video gives you step-by-step instructions: https://youtu.be/WhoXgXZL7I8 (There are other taping techniques, contact an AT if this technique doesn't work for you.)
- Widen the toe box of dance shoes. In some cases, dance shoewear can be pushed out or modified.

**Bruised Toenails**
- Occurs when undue pressures are applied to the toe bluntly or over time. This causes bleeding under the nail which can be very painful.
Treatment
- After bruising, use ice to soothe the pain
- Keep area clean to prevent infection
- The nail may loosen or fall off, but you should keep intact for as long as possible using tape or a bandage. Toenails only grow 1-2mm a month, so it may take a long time for a new nail to fully grow in. Second skin over the newly forming skin can act as a buffer and help with impact.
- Make an appointment with Sports Medicine if toenail show signs of infection or is too painful to dance on.
- Keep nails trimmed and have properly fitting shoes to prevent unnecessary pressure

**Ingrown Toenails**
- condition in which the corner or side of a toenail grows into the flesh

Treatment
- Soak in epsom salts to soften nail as it grows out.
- Extreme redness, warmth, or exudate in the area may be a sign of infection - make an appointment with Sports Medicine
- If toenail is not infected, cotton can be wedged under nail to guide nail to grow away from skin.
- Keep nails trimmed to shape of toe and use properly fitting shoes to prevent unnecessary pressure

**Toenail Fungus**
- Nail fungus is a common condition that begins as a white or yellow spot under the tip of your fingernail or toenail. As the fungal infection goes deeper, nail fungus may cause your nail to discolor, thicken and crumble at the edge. It can affect several nails but usually not all of them.

Treatment
- If toenails are not bothering you, you may not need treatment
- Home treatments include OTC anti-fungal nail treatments or Vick's VapoRub
- Trim the nails and thin thick nails with a nail file before treatment. Before trimming or using a nail file to thin thick nails, soften them. You can do this with the following nightly routine: Apply urea cream to affected nails, cover them with a bandage, and wash off the urea with soap and water in the morning. Repeat until the nails soften. Protect the skin around your nails with petroleum jelly.- If home treatments haven't helped, see a physician for prescription options
- Prevent by washing feet regularly. Keep toes and shoes dry with powders or sprays. Maintain good nail hygiene

**Morton's Neuroma**
- is an irritated nerve in the ball of your foot, most commonly the area between the third and fourth toes. It may feel as if you are standing on a pebble.
- tends to be caused from excessive pressure placed in front of foot

Treatment
- place a foam pad in the front of shoes (for barefoot dance, an AT can make you a foot jacket) to protect irritated area. Can also try adding arch support to shoes that cause the most pain.
- Ice bottom of foot to relieve pain
- If still unable to dance, a sports medicine physician may prescribe anti-inflammatory medication or an injection.