

Runner's Guide: When to Push Through Pain and When to Seek Podiatric Help

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Jun 10, 2025

For avid runners preparing for upcoming races in Springfield, Decatur, and Bloomington/Normal, knowing the difference between muscle soreness and potential injuries can be the key to crossing the finish line. While dedication to training is admirable, ignoring certain foot and ankle pain signals might sideline you for the entire season. According to John M. Sigle, DPM, FACFAS, "There are several warning signs for runners to look for to prevent foot and ankle injuries. Here are some important tips."

Normal Soreness vs. Warning Signs

Most runners are familiar with the general muscle fatigue that follows a challenging workout. This typical soreness usually appears 24-48 hours after exercise, affects both sides of the body equally, and gradually improves with rest.

However, Dr. John Sigle and the team at Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois warn that certain symptoms should never be ignored:

- Sharp, sudden, or stabbing pain
- Pain that worsens during activity
- Swelling that doesn't subside
- Pain concentrated in a specific spot
- Discomfort that alters your running form

"These symptoms often indicate something more serious than routine muscle soreness," explains Dr. Sigle. "Continuing to run through these warning signs can transform a minor issue into a season-ending injury."

Common Running Injuries That Require Professional Care

Plantar Fasciitis

That stabbing heel pain that is typically worse with your first steps in the morning, might be plantar fasciitis. This is a common overuse injury among runners. The condition involves inflammation of the thick band of tissue that connects your heel to your toes.

Achilles Tendonitis

Pain, stiffness, and swelling in the back of your heel could signal Achilles tendonitis. This condition frequently affects runners who suddenly increase their training intensity or distance without proper conditioning.

Stress Fractures

Tiny cracks in the bones of the foot can develop gradually from repetitive force. Unlike the general ache of muscle soreness, stress fractures typically cause focused pain that worsens during activity.

Specialized Treatment Options for Runners

According to Dr. Sigle, "The Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois offers comprehensive care for running-related foot and ankle conditions." These include the following:

- Advanced diagnostic imaging to precisely identify the source of pain
- Customized treatment plans tailored to each runner's specific condition
- Laser therapy that promotes healing while minimizing downtime
- Surgical intervention, when necessary, from experienced foot and ankle surgeons

"The Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois has world class imaging that allows runners to immediately obtain an MRI or CT scan without delay. This allows us to diagnose the runners condition and pursue the best treatment options." explains Dr. Sigle. "We

also have lasers that reduce edema and promote healing. These lasers are used by several professional and intercollegiate teams throughout the country,"

Strategies for Healthier Running

The podiatric team recommends several approaches to prevent running injuries:

- Gradually increase mileage (no more than 10% per week)
- Invest in proper running shoes appropriate for your foot type
- Replace running shoes every 300-500 miles
- Wear custom orthotics in your running shoes
- Incorporate cross-training and rest days into your schedule
- Address foot pain early before it becomes severe

When to Schedule an Appointment

If you're experiencing persistent foot or ankle pain that interferes with your running or daily activities, it's time to consult with a board-certified podiatric specialist. The Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois is conveniently located in Springfield, Decatur, Shelbyville, and Carlinville, Illinois. Don't let foot pain derail your racing goals. Get your feet in condition to participate in some of the running events scheduled throughout central Illinois this summer. Contact the Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois at (217) 787-2700 to schedule a comprehensive evaluation. Their team of podiatric specialists can help diagnose your condition and create a treatment plan that gets you back on the running trail safely.

Visit **www.myfootandanklecenter.com** to learn more about their services or to request an appointment online.

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