

Special Report:

Peripheral Neuropathy

Knowing Neuropathy

What is neuropathy? What are the causes of neuropathy? Can some vitamins help? How is neuropathy diagnosed? Learn about the test that can diagnose neuropathy, even if your nerve conduction study is normal. What are the other conditions that have symptoms that can mimic neuropathy? What is the difference between Axonal and Autoimmune neuropathy? What neuropathy treatments are available, and how well do they work?

Dr. Ahmet Höke, Professor of Neurology and Neuroscience at Johns Hopkins University, presents a patient seminar that answers your questions on this often confusing condition. Learn about new research being done at Johns Hopkins University and the [Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy](#). He discusses a treatment that you can do on your own that can reduce neuropathy and increase nerve regeneration - no medicine or machines required. Hint - it may involve your swimsuit!

[Watch the video here](#)

Alternative Treatments for Neuropathic Pain

Many of our patients complain about neuropathic pain. Whether their nerve damage is due to long term diabetes or even trauma, nerve pain can be truly unbearable. Though there are a variety of medications that your doctor can prescribe you for nerve pain, there are also many alternative treatments that many patients have benefited from. If you are suffering from uncomfortable numbness, tingling, or shooting nerve pain you may want to try some of these options.

First and foremost is Capsaicin. Capsaicin is derived from chemicals found in hot chili peppers. Usually used in cream form, the capsaicin can be rubbed into the skin of the affected area. The chemical will create a burning sensation that some find to be relieving, and others find to be unbearable. Over time however, the burning sensation will begin to decrease and studies have shown that along with consistent use comes decent relief from neuropathic pain.

Many patients also find relief from peripheral neuropathy by soaking their feet in warm water. If this works for you, great! However, we do have one word of advice; Check the water. Patients with nerve damage may have decreased sensation, so placing their feet (for

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example) in the water may not really tell them how hot the water actually is. This can result in burns. So if you do enjoy soaks, please remember to check the water with your hands or even an elbow before placing your feet in scalding water.

Of course we always advocate that our diabetic patients stay on track with controlling their blood sugar. Keeping a well-regulated blood glucose will keep nerve damage from progressing further and making patients even more uncomfortable.

Acupuncture and Neuropathy

A discussion about alternative treatment would not nearly be complete without a brief look into Acupuncture therapy. Even if having someone stick needles into you at different points around your body doesn't sound like a pleasant time- if you are in chronic pain from neuropathy, this timeless treatment may be exactly what you need.

Acupuncture therapy is a form of medical treatment that dates back to ancient China. The belief used in the practice of acupuncture is that placing needles at special points on a patient's body will alter the patient's Qi (pronounced "chee"), or energy, and return the body to a healthy balance. Though to some this may sound like Voodoo magic, there is evidence to support that acupuncture therapy has an appropriate use in modern medicine. Current theorists state that when an acupuncture needle is placed it will trigger a sensory nerve to fire and send a message to the central nervous system (your brain and spinal cord). This can cause the central nervous system to release chemicals called endorphins which are the bodies naturally occurring pain killers. With the appropriate type and amount of treatments for each patient, acupuncture may actually train your body to respond to pain in a new way and alleviate some of the chronic symptoms of neuropathic pain.

Of course many patients are intimidated by trying a new type of therapy. However, there is no need to be! If you are interested in trying acupuncture therapy, it is important to know that there are over 16,000 licensed acupuncturists in the United States. Also, the World Health Organization (WHO) actually recognizes over forty different health issues as treatable by acupuncture therapy. Lastly, the United States Food and Drug Administration oversees the production of acupuncture needles, as they would other medical devices, to ensure their sterility and safety. All of these things should help you feel more comfortable about giving acupuncture therapy a try.

As with any treatment, acupuncture therapy is not for everyone. If you are fearful of needles, this may not be the course of therapy for you (though these are much smaller needles than typical injections and hurt much less). It is important to keep in mind also that one treatment may not be enough. It is recommended that a patient undergo 5-10 treatments before they judge if the therapy has been beneficial. In the end, if you are in chronic pain, acupuncture may be the light at the end of the tunnel that you have been looking for!

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What Medications are Used to Treat Neuropathy?

Peripheral Neuropathy is a common complication of diabetes. It can also have other causes, such as chemotherapy. Until recently, the only treatment for neuropathy was medication. Common medications for neuropathy, or neuropathic pain, include pain relievers such as NSAIDs (ibuprofen or Aleve) and opiates/narcotics (Percoset or Vicodin). Some of the more common other categories are Anticonvulsants (Gabapentin [Neurontin], Lyrica), SSRIs (Cymbalta), and Tricyclic Antidepressants, or TCAs (Amitriptiline). They seem to be only marginally successful, and can have some side effects.

An Exciting New Neuropathy Treatment May be Able to End Your Pain ... Today!

After many sleepless nights and failed treatments, you may be ready to give up on not only treating your neuropathy, but on life. Our neuropathy experts have spoken with many patients who are exhausted, frustrated and seemingly out of options. In desperation, they have come to us, hoping against hope that our expert podiatrists can help them.

Fortunately, we often can. The Milwaukee Foot Specialists are one of only 15 podiatry offices nationwide who successfully use this cutting-edge neuropathy treatment. The program we use is like no other and has given hope to so many who thought they would live in pain forever. Here is just one example of someone whose life has been forever changed by this new and exciting treatment program for neuropathy:

My feet and legs used to hurt – they felt like logs when I tried to walk. My feet were discolored, black and blue. After the treatment, my feet are nice and pink and normal.

I can walk better– my legs feel really good. I can definitely see that it is working. I have much more feeling. My toes don't freeze at night anymore – there is a lot more blood flowing to them. I can sleep a lot better at night now. I know that Dr. Waldman has my best interests at heart. I have already recommended this treatment to others.

-Ralph S., Milwaukee

Giving Hope to the Hopeless

If you have given up hope, you are not alone. However, our team of podiatrists have dedicated our careers to finding the most modern, effective treatment options available. Our greatest joy is helping those who believed that they were destined to spend the rest of their lives exhausted and in pain.

The neuropathy treatment option we offer is helping people just like you get their lives back. If you are ready to end your pain, to find a drug-free, steroid-free treatment that has the potential to change your life for the better, please make an appointment at one of our four Milwaukee area podiatry offices by calling 414-257-0676 today.

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