

## Wilton Podiatrist Announces 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Local podiatrist Dr. Michael Connor has been keeping patients in the Wilton-Norwalk area on their feet and on the go for many years. This May marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dr. Connor's practice. Reflecting on this milestone achievement, the podiatrist expressed both gratitude and professional fulfillment.

"I love being a small town podiatrist. The sense of community here is very rewarding," Dr. Connor says. "I look forward to many more years of practice."

Dr. Connor, a graduate of The New York College of Podiatric Medicine, finds great satisfaction in helping people who are having trouble with their feet. "Feet problems become life problems," he says. "We need our feet in order to stay active. That's my goal: to keep my patients active."

In Dr. Connor's opinion, podiatry is often misunderstood. The range of care extends far beyond the treatment of bunions, warts and foot fungus, he explains. When it comes to feet, podiatrists address and treat everything from orthopedic to dermatological to vascular issues. "We do everything a medical doctor does, from X-rays to surgery to prescribing medication."

Dr. Connor first began treating patients in the Wilton-Norwalk area in 1991, in an office on Danbury Road across from John's Best Pizza. By 2004, his practice had grown significantly, and it was time for more room. That is when Dr. Connor relocated to his current address at 27 Danbury Road - the red brick building owned by Kaoud Brothers Oriental Rugs - where he remains in practice today.

The larger space – 2,000 square feet – has meant more comfort and convenience for his patients. In addition to three treatment rooms, a waiting room, and a receptionist area, the office is also equipped with an X-ray unit helpful for trauma and those who prefer to avoid the emergency room and urgent care centers. Dr. Connor states, “We always allow time in our schedule for emergency, same day appointments.”

And then there are the beautiful views of the Norwalk River that patients enjoy from each room of his office. It brings warmth and serenity to the space, Dr. Connor acknowledges.

If there is one thing Dr. Connor appreciates about being a community-based podiatrist, it’s the variety of cases he sees. His youngest patient is 3 months old. His oldest is 104 years old. He treats high performance athletes for sports injuries such as stress fractures, heel pain and plantar fasciitis; but he also treats the same issues in weekend warriors and people completely new to exercising. Dr. Connor sees patients for routine care as well as in times of crisis. He treats ingrown toenails, warts and athlete’s foot with the same dedication and seriousness as broken bones and diabetic foot infections.

“I love treating patients everyday,” Dr. Connor says. “I feel like it’s my first day always when I come to the office.”

What Dr. Connor really would like people to understand, however, is that early intervention - when it comes to foot problems - can prevent a world of suffering down the road. “Unfortunately, many people come to me only after they are experiencing severe discomfort,” he says. “Of course, I can still help them, but I

would much rather see people at the first sign of trouble - before the pain escalates.”

Some common signs of foot trouble include: pain and swelling not caused by an injury, increased redness and/or warmth of the foot.

Dr. Connor dedicates much of his practice to helping patients with diabetic foot care. Diabetic foot care is a growing area of focus within podiatric medicine. According to the American Diabetes Association, 1.4 million Americans are diagnosed with this disease each year. Diabetics often experience a loss of sensation in their feet from neuropathy that can lead to severe problems. If patients with this disease are treated on a regular basis, complications can be greatly reduced.

Dr. Connor’s appreciation for healthy feet developed early. As a young boy growing up on Long Island, he – like most of his eight brothers and sisters - played soccer competitively. “Soccer is all about footwork,” he says. “Soccer players think about their feet a lot – just like runners and dancers and many other athletes.” He also used his feet to earn money for college as a clam digger in the Great South Bay off the South Shore of Long Island. Dr. Connor remembers those summers in high school and college fondly. “We used to tread water while using our feet to feel for the clams in the mud. Then we’d go down and pick them up – about 1,000 times each day. It was great.”

It was not until college that Dr. Connor began considering a career as a podiatrist. One of his soccer teammates accidentally spiked his foot, and he ended up in the office of a beloved community podiatrist who ultimately made a very

favorable impression upon him. “All of this podiatrist’s patients felt so well-cared-for by their doctor,” Dr. Connor says. “I thought that was really neat.”

Dr. Connor went on to receive a bachelor’s degree in physical therapy from the University of Buffalo. After first working as a licensed physical therapist at a local hospital, he enrolled at the New York College of Podiatric Medicine. He received a Doctorate of Podiatric Medicine from New York College of Podiatric Medicine in New York City. He then completed a one-year residency in podiatric orthopedics at the New York College of Podiatric Medicine and Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, New York.

Dr. Connor still thinks about that podiatrist who influenced his future and feels fortunate to have followed in his footsteps.

Dr. Connor lives with his wife and three children in Fairfield, CT. He is Board Certified in Foot Surgery and on staff at Norwalk Hospital where he performs surgery. He has served as President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary of the Fairfield County Podiatric Medical Association.