

Go the Distance Carolina Foot Specialists

THERE IS NOTHING MORE frustrating when training for a race than being sidelined by a foot injury. Dr. Andrew Saffer and Dr. Adam Brown of Carolina Foot Specialists can relate to this frustration because, as athletes, they've suffered some of the same foot conditions.

They grew up in Charleston and played high school basketball on the same team. After graduating from the College of Charleston, Dr. Brown attended medical school at Barry University School of Graduate Medical Sciences, while Dr. Saffer attended Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine. Joining forces in 2006, they opened offices in Charleston and Mount Pleasant.

"We both gravitated to the sports aspect of podiatry, as well as the diversity that this profession provides, such as treating children, foot reconstructive surgery and helping the local active community with various foot ailments," said Dr. Brown.

Today, they both are avid runners and sports enthusiasts who understand how important exercise is for the body.

Heel pain and plantar fasciitis are the most common problems Dr. Brown and Dr. Saffer see. They pointed out that many injuries are a result of overuse.

"Most runners live with aches and pains, thinking that's part of the normal process, and it's not the case," said Dr. Brown. "We are both trained and board-certified in foot surgery but are able to heal most foot conditions, especially chronic heel pain, with conservative treatments. We offer state-of-the-art, minimally invasive surgical options for chronic heel pain that enables patients to get back to their chosen activity sooner," Dr. Saffer said.

According to Drs. Brown and Saffer, training smart is the best way to prepare for the upcoming Cooper River

Bridge Run. They offered advice on some common mistakes to avoid:

Going too fast and too hard - Your body needs time to adapt when you train harder and run farther. We commonly see overuse injuries from increasing mileage too quickly, which can lead to foot injuries such as stress fractures. The take home message is pace yourself and progress slowly to build up over time. You can find training tips for the Bridge Run at www.Carolinafootspecialists.net.

Wearing the wrong shoe - We recommend replacing your running shoes every 300 to 400 miles or every six to eight months.

Running through an injury

- This can lead to a chronic injury that can take longer to heal. Allow the body to heal. Start with RICE (Rest, ice, compression and elevation), mixed with a short-term NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug.) If there is no improvement after a week, you need to be evaluated by a specialist.

Running only

- Running strengthens some muscles but not others. It's important to retain and improve your flexibility with swimming, spinning, elliptical, strength training and body flow, a mixture of tai chi, yoga and Pilates.

Heel striking - Try landing mid-sole and shortening your stride. A shorter stride will typically lower the force of impact, which should reduce injuries.

Listen to your body - Simple conservative treatments can resolve a majority of acute foot pain. We don't tell our patients to stop exercising; we come up with solutions for treatment. 🦶



Drs. Adam Brown, left, and Andrew Saffer.

Photo courtesy of Carolina Foot Specialists.

The two locations of Carolina Foot Specialists are 501 Bramson Court in Mount Pleasant and 615 Wesley Drive in Charleston. To learn more, visit www.Carolinafootspecialists.net.