

# Using laser to treat a foot

People with damaged bones, arthritis and poor circulation are being treated with laser light energy.

Clinic Director from Dr Foot Solutions in Drummoine Bronwyn Cooper told The Weekly Times the MLS is Class 4 laser (pictured) which penetrates three to four centimeters to assist bone healing, arthritis and deep seated injuries and poor circulation. "Laser is a form of light energy, that has been harnessed in this way for medical, dental, veterinary applications for over 30 years," Bronwyn Cooper said.

"The precursors to this higher level application are Class 3 lasers and there are a very large number of these units in clinical practices.

"Class 4 is a stand out for chronic pain, no matter what type.

"However, as it is an ocular hazard and eye protection has to be worn, it is not advisable to use on very young children, although one advantage of Class 4 is that the treatment times/delivery of laser light are

shortened.

"The youngest patients I have used laser on were around age 10 for growth plate injuries of the heel, called calcaneal apophysitis.

"There is no upper limit to age that this can be used on. The oldest I have used it on is 93, really it can be a stand out for frail aged with arthritis and or peripheral vascular disease."

Bronwyn Cooper said she has recently used MLS on a patient in her

late sixties for postherpetic neuralgia, which had been causing chronic debilitating pain of eight years duration, in a number of dermatomes including feet and posterior pelvic area.

"She responded immediately and had no pain at return visit three days later.

"Keep in mind, that laser is not used as a stand alone treatment, but rather is an integral part of firstly breaking the pain cycle due to the analgesic setting, as well as its anti oedema and inflammation effects, with other modalities being implemented, in this case

Ms Cooper also spoke about barefoot science, kinesiotaping and physiological footwear.

"Barefoot science is helpful for anyone who functions in shoes, in the urban built environment, which is pretty much everyone! Poor posture, balance and pain in any weight bearing linkage will benefit, all the way through to neck and shoulders," she said.

"It is particularly helpful for those who are on their feet constantly in occupations such as hospitality, retail, teachers, nursing, security, emergency workers and police as well, anyone who walks, let alone does gym and sport of any kind.

"By stimulating the 2000 nerve endings in the sole of the foot (known as sensomotoric effect), foot strike is softened, balance is stimulated, so a knock out for the vision impaired and any disease of the neuromuscular system, ranging from MS to strokes.

"The effect can be felt immediately in these groups.

"Cycling benefits include stimulus that helps stop the foot drifting into the wrong position on pedal, helping to avoid repetitive cycles of excessive internal rotation of the leg, which can otherwise lead to ITB problems and the like.

"In my opinion, based on my specialized expertise over seven years of using and evaluating this technique/device and BFS own research and data for 12 plus years overseas, there is less than 1% of the community where BFS is not really useful.

"These are the very small group who can and do run barefoot, or stand comfortably barefoot for long hours on hardwood/ceramic floors and the like.

"However, it is a must for those shod people who want to safely transition to this barefoot state, expediting the transition in a safe and timely manner."

Bronwyn now runs seminars and workshops for healthcare practitioners to have better understanding on the clinical implications of footwear and barefoot function, both walking and running, and their patients' conditions.

For further details see the ad on this page.



OnePointHealth is offering free diabetic foot health assessments during October

## Link between foot health and diabetes

October is Foot Health Month and this year the team at OnePointHealth is aiming to raise awareness of the importance of foot health and diabetes.

"More than one million Australians have diabetes, with this figure projected to rise to 3.3 million by the year 2031," the team at OnePointHealth said.

"It is thought that for every case of diagnosed diabetes, there is also one undiagnosed case of diabetes.

"Taking this into account, the estimated overall number of individuals with diabetes in Australia alone is over two million people.

"Every day in Australia, there are approximately 280 new cases of diabetes being diagnosed.

"Diabetes is now the world's fastest growing chronic disease."

The team said that Diabetic complications are also on the rise, with 85

Australians losing toes, feet or even legs each week.

"This adds up to over 4,400 diabetes-related amputations occurring each year.

"Consequently amputation of one limb increases the risk of loss of the second limb and is also associated with a 50 per cent, five year mortality rate.

The team stressed the importance of diabetes and foot health treatment.

"It is suggested that up to 85 per cent of all diabetic foot complications can be prevented simply through education and awareness.

"This is where the podiatry team at OnePointHealth can help.

"Throughout October, we are aiming to raise the awareness of foot health and diabetes, by providing free diabetic foot health assessments.

"Our podiatrists will assess your foot health, along with providing edu-

cation and recommendations for how to maintain good foot health.

"So if you or someone you know has diabetes, be sure to book a free diabetic foot health assessment during the month of October."

In the meantime, the team suggested these tips to having healthy feet:

"Look and check your feet very day for changes.

"Use a hand mirror if you find it hard to reach.

"Protect and ensure that you are wearing correct-fitting footwear and avoid going barefoot.

"Prevent and don't allow for problems to occur.

"Ensure you wash and dry your feet properly every day, particularly between the toes.

"Seek advice and if you do notice any changes, seek medical advice from your podiatrist or doctor as soon as possible.

"Do have an annual foot health assessment with your podiatrist."



### Dr Foot Solutions

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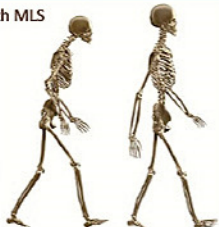
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Bronwyn Cooper, Rehab Podiatrist, Consultant in Chronic Pain and Footgear

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