

FOOT FACTS

By Dr. Raymond
Fritz



Is your foot fracture an early sign of osteoporosis?

Unexplained foot fractures may be the first sign of osteoporosis, a bone thinning disease which affects more than 28 million Americans and accounts for 1.5 million bone fractures a year.

According to Allentown foot and ankle surgeon Raymond A. Fritz Jr. DPM, FAC-FAS, osteoporosis is frequently referred to as the "silent crippler" since it often progresses without any symptoms or isn't diagnosed until a person experiences pain from a bone fracture.

Dr. Fritz, a member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, explains that the porous nature of bones in people with osteoporosis makes them more susceptible to bone fractures, especially in the feet.

"Because the bones are in a weakened state, normal weight-bearing actions like walking can cause the bones in the foot to break," says Dr. Fritz. "In fact, many patients visit their foot and ankle surgeon suffering from foot pain only to find out they actually have a stress fracture, without having experienced an injury."

While osteoporosis is most commonly seen in women over age 50, younger people and men are also affected.

Early symptoms can include increased pain with walking accompanied by redness and swelling on the top of the foot.

"Often times patients don't seek treatment for their symptoms for weeks or even months, thinking the pain will pass," says Dr. Fritz. "The best advice is, don't ignore foot pain of any type. Early intervention can make all the difference in your treatment and recovery."

Foot and ankle surgeons are able to diagnose osteoporosis through bone densitometry tests, which measure calcium and mineral levels in the bones through low-dose radiation X-ray, or possibly through a routine X-ray.

"This is why prevention and early intervention are key; women should make sure bone densitometry tests are part of their wellness examinations when indicated by their physicians," Dr. Fritz explains.

If you are diagnosed with osteoporosis, it's important to protect your feet from stress fractures. Wear shoes that provide support and cushioning, such as athletic running shoes, to provide extra shock absorption and protection.

Custom orthotics may also be recommended to protect the foot from pressure and provide shock absorption, particularly during exercise.

If you are suffering from foot pain or suspect you may have osteoporosis, call Allentown Family Foot Care at 610-434-7000 for an evaluation.

For more information on osteoporosis of the foot, visit the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons' website, FootHealthFacts.org.

For more information, contact Drs. Raymond Fritz, Lora Baker, Ann Anderson, Randy Smargiassi or Crystal Gonzalez at Allentown Family Foot Care, 1633 N. 26th St., South Whitehall Township; 2100 Hanover Ave., Allentown; Route 145 (Best Avenue) and Spruce Street, Walnutport; or 101 S. Main St., Coopersburg.

All locations may be called by dialing 610-434-7000.

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GUEST VIEW

Addresses not exempt when seeking 911 response logs

While the legal battle over release of public school employee home addresses has continued to rage in Pennsylvania's appellate courts, another aspect of the home address debate is settled.



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In *Czech v. County of York*, a unanimous panel of the Commonwealth Court clarified the parameters of the Right-to-Know Law's exemption for 911 records and information, holding that the law does not exempt address information from "time response logs."

Section 708(b)(18) of the law specifically exempts 911 recordings and various related records from disclosure, but explicitly makes "time response logs" public records.

Ted Czech, a reporter employed by the York Daily Record, submitted an open records request to the County of York seeking "time response logs for York County 911 for December 2008 and January and February 2009 with addresses included, i.e., where the units dispatched were headed."

Czech sought address information in order to determine the reliability of response times and the efficiency of emergency responders resulting from York County 911 calls.

The county denied the request for address information.

On appeal to the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records,

the county filed an affidavit from the York County 911 director setting forth a proposed definition of "time response log."

The county also offered a copy of two pages of legislative history containing a brief transcript of floor discussion between two state representatives less than a week before Gov. Edward G. Rendell signed Senate Bill No. 1 into law.

The OOR held that the county failed to meet its burden of proof to establish an exemption for address information in time response logs and ordered the release of incident street addresses or cross street information.

The York County Court of Common Pleas reversed.

On appeal, the Commonwealth Court, in an opinion authored by Judge Dan Pellegrini, initially held that the county, not Czech, bore the burden of establishing that the requested address information was exempt from public access under the law.

Because the term "time response logs" was not defined in the law, the court performed an exhaustive review of the legislative history and discussion behind the law's treatment of 911 records and the term "time response logs."

Based upon the legislative history, the court concluded that the floor statements and legislative discussion relied upon by the county did not evidence any legislative intent on the part of the Legislature to exclude address information from time response logs.

The court noted that the overall objective to be achieved by the law was to expand public access to gov-



ernment documents and to foster openness in government.

In that regard, the court wrote that the "General Assembly's object in requiring access to 'time response logs' was to allow the citizenry 'to scrutinize the actions of public officials' by evaluating the efficiency of each county's emergency response to various 911 calls."

Moreover, "[i]n order to be able to conduct such an evaluation or, for that matter, emergency responders to monitor their own performance, time response logs must contain the time of the request for service, the address or cross-street information, and when the responder arrived at the scene.

Without the address or cross-street information, there would be no way of knowing exactly how far the emergency responders had to travel in response to any given call and, therefore, no way of determining whether or not those response times were deficient."

Accordingly, the court held that the term "time response logs" as used in the Right-to-Know Law did not exempt destination addresses or cross-street information.

The proper functioning of 911 and emergency medical services systems are essential components of medical care, and delays in receiving emergency care can contribute to the death or permanent injury of those affected.

Only with the release of destination address information or appropriate cross-street information can the wisdom of public disbursements to 911 centers be evaluated and public officials held accountable therefore.

Perhaps most importantly, accurate address information supplies an indispensable element needed to assess the efficiency of emergency responders. The Czech court got it right, and all Pennsylvanians will benefit from improvements in EMS response times.

Editor's note: The Benn Law Firm, states on its website that it "protects and assists newspapers and media organizations in matters involving access to public records, courtrooms and meetings, pre-publication review and First Amendment disputes, including libel defense."

"In cases where reporters are subpoenaed, we vigorously fight to quash the subpoenas and maintain media independence..."

Terence J. Barna Esq. of the Benn Law Firm contributed to this article.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Writer advises standing up to the NRA

To the Editor:
When the attitudes of people change, then there can be

aspects of cigarette smoking, including the effects of second-hand smoke as a

was passed and attitudes toward smoking changed. Now we, as a country, are

toward mass murder by these lethal weapons, the NRA will continue to beat its