

A Step in the Right Direction



AFTER VISITING SEVERAL DOCTORS, MICHAEL DEAN FELT DEFEATED. DIAGNOSED IN DECEMBER 2004 WITH AN ULCER AND A BONE INFECTION ON THE FOURTH TOE OF HIS LEFT FOOT, MICHAEL, 68, HAD RECEIVED A GRIM PROGNOSIS FROM EVERY DOCTOR HE SAW.

At first his physicians informed him that his toe and foot could be saved, but after a couple of appointments, they all changed their tune to say that leg amputation was most likely inevitable due to the bone infection.

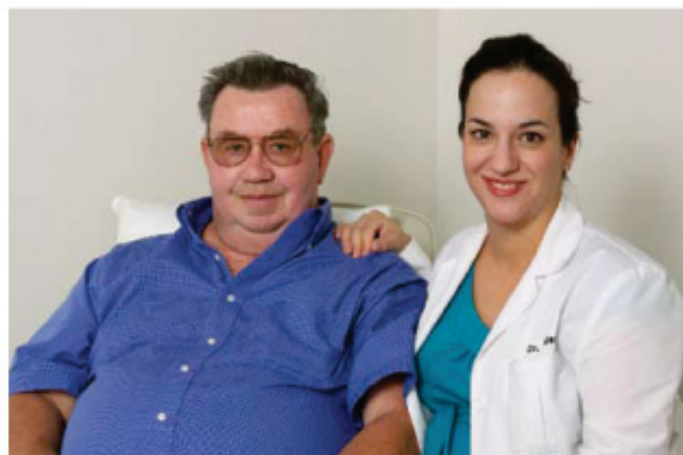
A diabetic since 1990, Michael had always taken an active role in his health, so he was very discouraged to discover that no one seemed able to help him. Suffering and in pain, Michael was close to needing a wheelchair and quickly losing hope. Antibiotics and other treatments seemed to offer little help or hope. Eventually, Michael was told that because the ulcer couldn't be cured, he may need to have his leg amputated from the knee down.

A Ray of Hope

Aware of Michael's condition, a friend referred him to Allentown Family Foot Care. Michael came in for his first appointment on Aug. 16, 2005, to see Dr. Raymond A. Fritz, Jr. After examining the ulcer on Michael's toe, Dr. Fritz referred him to Dr. Ann C. Anderson, a fellow podiatrist with extensive training in surgical procedures to save diabetic limbs. After examining Michael's foot herself, Dr. Anderson concluded, "I can fix this." Looking back on that fateful day, Michael felt the first stirrings of hope. He recalls, "August 16 was my birthday, and that news was the best birthday present I ever got."

Experienced Care

Dr. Anderson began practicing with Allentown Family Foot Care in July 2005. She earned her Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree from the Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine in Philadelphia after earning her Bachelor of Science in Biology at Cornell University. She completed a three-year reconstructive foot and ankle surgical residency training at the INOVA Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, Va. As part of her residency program, she completed specialty training in foot and ankle reconstruction, revisional foot and ankle surgery, and wound care/limb salvage training at the Georgetown University Hospital Limb Center.



Patient Michael Dean and Dr. Ann C. Anderson of Allentown Family Foot Care.



In addition, Dr. Anderson has extensive experience and specializes in surgical procedures of the foot and ankle, especially bunion reduction, flatfoot reconstruction, diabetic/Charcot foot surgery and limb salvage. She has a special interest in treating patients with complicated wounds and preserving their ability to walk. She also enjoys performing revisional foot and ankle surgery. She understands the importance of maintaining an active lifestyle and is committed to caring for patients throughout all aspects of treatment, and she believed that Michael's foot could be saved.

Teamwork and Treatment

Michael was admitted to Sacred Heart Hospital in September 2005 under the care of Dr. Anderson, who assembled the medical team consisting of herself, Dr. Mahmood Tahir and Dr. Amit H. Gangoli, to treat Michael. Dr. Anderson surgically drained the bone infection in Michael's foot and removed all of the dead tissue and bone. Dr. Tahir, a vascular surgeon at Sacred Heart Hospital, performed vascular testing to ensure that Michael's circulation was adequate to ensure healing. Dr. Gangoli, a specialist in infectious diseases, helped monitor Michael's treatment with antibiotics to ensure the bone infection cleared.

Michael was hospitalized for a week and then sent home on antibiotics. He utilized

Sacred Heart Home Care Services for wound care during his recovery while also seeing Dr. Anderson weekly to monitor his follow-up progress. Finally, in December 2005, Dr. Anderson took skin from Michael's third toe and rotated it to completely cover the wound and close his foot.

“If it weren't for Dr. Anderson, I wouldn't have my foot today. If anything happens to me, Allentown Family Foot Care is the first place I go.”

- Michael Dean

A Complete Recovery

By the spring of 2006, Michael's recovery was complete and he continues to walk on his leg. He returns to Allentown Family Foot Care for follow-up appointments and will always be extremely grateful to Dr. Anderson and others involved in his care for helping save his foot and leg. “If it weren't for Dr. Anderson, I wouldn't have my foot today,” he says.

Dr. Anderson feels that the treatment of many diabetic foot conditions requires teamwork and collaboration among different doctors and specialties within one health care system. “So many other conditions and diseases coexist with diabetes, so preventive care is so important,”

AVOID DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

If left untreated, diabetes can contribute to a wide range of conditions, including heart disease, kidney disease, amputations, blindness and other serious problems. At Sacred Heart Hospital's Diabetes Center, our specially trained diabetes professionals offer one-on-one or group instruction on a variety of topics such as meal planning, self-monitoring of blood glucose, prevention of diabetic complications, and exercise, foot, and skin care. Support groups for diabetics and loved ones are also available. To learn more about the Diabetes Center, please call 866-458-4309.

Diabetes Facts*

- ✦ More than 60% of non-traumatic lower-limb amputations occur in people with diabetes.
- ✦ The rate of amputation for people with diabetes is 10 times higher than for people without diabetes.
- ✦ Comprehensive foot care programs can reduce amputation rates by 45%-65%.

* Source: American Diabetes Association.

Dr. Anderson says, “The earlier these conditions are identified and treated, the more limbs we can save.” Michael remains vigilant about taking care of his health and remarks that, “If anything happens to me, Allentown Family Foot Care is the first place I go.”