

## Stephen Furst, An Actor, Producer, Director and Also a Diabetic

By Chris Liscio

Many of you may know Stephen Furst as Kent “Flounder” Dorfman in the classic comedy film *Animal House*, as well as many other television and film roles. Today, Stephen is a successful producer and director. In addition to juggling his successful career and family life, Stephen has dealt with recurrent diabetic foot ulcers as a diabetic patient.



sock and rolls over the foot and calf like a sock. It hardens in about 15–20 minutes. You wear it with a protective boot.”

If left untreated, diabetic foot wounds can become serious, placing you at *risk for amputation and other life-threatening conditions*. Diabetic foot ulcers result in considerable morbidity and mortality.

Dr. Rogers went on to explain that “with almost 90% of patients, ulcers heal in about 6–8 weeks, according to studies on total contact casting.<sup>1,2</sup> Generally, I see patients weekly after applying the cast. I remove it, check the ulcer, provide local care, and put a new one on. Patients tell me that the cast is comfortable to wear, and that they are fairly mobile while wearing it.”

When Stephen was told he could lose his foot, it signaled a huge wake-up call. When Stephen went to see his new podiatrist, Lee Rogers DPM, Stephen told him he didn’t feel any pain. He was told this is very common in patients with diabetes. He also told Stephen this was one of the challenges with diabetic foot ulcers—the *absence* of pain, often called the loss of protective sensation or neuropathy. Because of the nerve damage caused by diabetes, patients are often not aware of the problems early on. Repetitive stress from walking continues to damage the tissue, because these diabetics simply do not feel pain. By the time patients with diabetes know there is a problem, it’s often very severe and requires specialized treatment.



After reviewing Stephen’s history and examining him, Dr. Rogers told him about the **TCC-EZ® system**—a one-piece, roll-on, lightweight cast that simplifies the casting process.

TCC-EZ® is a total contact cast, which is designed to off-load weight from the bottom of the foot. This is essential to allow wounds on the foot to heal. Total contact casting is the preferred method for healing diabetic foot ulcers. In fact, many experts consider it the Gold Standard.

Dr. Rogers explained, “Application of the TCC-EZ® is quick and easy. It may cause warmth, but no pain, and it has the added benefit of allowing the patient to carrying on with his normal daily life without much modification.”

Stephen later told us “Learning that there was a solution, like TCC-EZ®, allowed me to continue to do the things that were important to me, and that made all the difference. When I first heard about TCC-EZ®, my first thought was that it was going to be like a regular plaster cast. I thought about getting some felt-tip pens so friends could sign it, but it wasn’t like that at all”. He also went on to say “Imagine my surprise when I experienced my first application. TCC-EZ® looks similar to a soccer player’s

contact casting.<sup>1,2</sup> Generally, I see patients weekly after applying the cast. I remove it, check the ulcer, provide local care, and put a new one on. Patients tell me that the cast is comfortable to wear, and that they are fairly mobile while wearing it.”

Stephen ended our discussion with a thought from one of his movies, “Not taking care of your diabetes is like something very famous that was said to me once. ‘Fat drunk and stupid is no way to go through life’, you *don’t* want to *live in ignorance*, you *don’t* want to *have an amputated foot*, you *don’t* want to *die from a heart attack or a stroke*. Take care of your diabetes; you need to *check your sugars, exercise* if you can, you have to *be more powerful than the disease!*”

To see the video of Stephen’s story, go to [www.healyourulcer.com](http://www.healyourulcer.com)

For more information call 800-445-7627, visit [www.tccEZ.com](http://www.tccEZ.com) or [click here](#).

### References

- 1 Armstrong DG, et al. Off-loading the diabetic foot wound. *Diabetes Care*, 24:1019-1022, 2001.
- 2 Bloomgarden, ZT; American Diabetes Association 60th Scientific Sessions, 2000. *Diabetes Care* 24:946-951, 2001

The screenshot shows the homepage of healyourulcer.com. At the top, it says "IT'S TIME TO HEAL YOUR DIABETIC FOOT ULCER!". Below this, there are three main sections:
 

- 85%** In people with diabetes, 85% of lower leg amputations occur on or as a foot ulcer.
- ULCER TREATMENT**: Total contact casting is the gold standard for off-loading weight from ulcers. When you off-load the ulcer, the foot heals.
- TOTAL CONTACT CASTING**: A single piece cast is rolled over the foot and secured with a protective boot. It is comfortable to wear and allows for mobility.
- FIND TREATMENT CENTERS**: Search for treatment centers that use total contact casting as a standard of care. Enter your zip code.

 A testimonial from Stephen Furst is featured, stating "Worst thing I feared, was an amputation...". The website also includes a navigation menu at the top and bottom.