

Did you Know?



The skin on the sole of your foot is thicker than anywhere else on your body.

Each of your feet is made up of 26 bones, 19 muscles, 33 joints and 107 ligaments.

A toenail takes 6 months to grow from the base to the tip.

One foot is often slightly larger than the other.

Each foot has over 250,000 sweat glands.

Each foot can produce a small juice carton amount of sweat each day.

Never cut toenails too short this can cause pain and nail problems.

Toenails grow at a much slower rate than our fingernails.

Wearing good shoes helps support the feet and helps them develop properly.

Podiatry Department

Take a Step in the 

Footcare Tips for Young Adults



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www.fifehealthandsocialcare.org

Your Feet

Your feet do an amazing amount of work each day. From the moment you step out of bed in the morning your feet start working. Perfecting those gymnastic moves, aiming the penalty on target, dancing with grace and moving in balance - your feet are always at work.

Your feet play an important part in your everyday life - you need to make sure that they are kept in good condition so you can whatever activity or task you want to do. Think about it, if your feet are sore, it is not much fun doing simple things like walking.

The aim of this leaflet is to give you advice on looking after your feet and what you should do if you have any problems with your feet.



What is a Podiatrist?

A podiatrist is a person who has had special training in how to care for feet.

It is a podiatrist's job to help children and adults look after their feet in order to keep them healthy. They can offer help and advice for any problems you might have with your feet.

If you have problems with your feet you might have to visit a podiatrist who will be able to help you.



Foot Pain

It's not unusual for you, as your body grows, to feel a bit of pain now and again. However if you have a lot of pain in your feet or legs, or are uncomfortable doing normal things like walking, running or standing you should let your parent or carer know as you may need an assessment from a Podiatrist.

Fighting Fit Feet

Exercise is important for your whole body. Did you know it's more tiring standing still than it is to walk or run around? That's because when you stand still you are putting all your body weight on your feet, but when you walk or run you spread the weight throughout your body.

Walking is one of the best exercises for your feet, so planning a good walk with friends a few times a week is a great way to help exercise the muscles in your feet, and it's great for your overall health and fitness too .

When Feet don't feel good

Just like the rest of your body, your feet can get sore, catch 'bugs' and basically feel unwell. If your feet are painful then it can make doing everyday things more difficult.

Always let your parent or carer know if you have sore parts on your feet.



Common Foot Problems

Blisters

Are little bubbles of skin full of liquid and tend to happen when your feet are hot or sweaty and rub against your shoes or socks. Although they can be sore they will clear up by themselves. It is best not to burst the blister. If it is uncomfortable it can be covered with a simple plaster or dressing.

Ingrown Toenails

Ingrown toenails arise when the nail on your toe grows the wrong way, this can happen when the nail has been cut too short, has been hit or injured, or because your shoes don't fit well. The nail will be quite sore and the skin around it will be red and might feel a bit hot to touch.

Verrucae



A verruca is a virus that can create a lump of hard skin on your foot. Most young people 'catch' the virus from being barefoot in changing areas. If you can, wear flip flop type shoes in changing areas as there is less chance of catching bugs from the floor areas.

Verrucae can be easily passed on so don't share towels and clean the bath/shower after you've used it. If it's not sore then that's great! It may take a long time but verrucae do disappear on their own. If you experience pain tell a parent or carer so they can arrange to have it seen by a Podiatrist.



Common Foot Problems

Athlete's Foot



Athlete's Foot is a fungal infection and like verrucae it can be caught from changing rooms and similar places. It can also be caused by too much moisture building up around the feet, therefore it's important to dry your feet properly and change your socks regularly so your feet are kept fresh.

It can make the skin between your toes crack and feel sore, itchy and red. Sometimes there is signs of dry skin on other parts of your feet too. If your feet feel like this ask your parent or carer to have a look. If you have Athlete's Foot you will need to see a Podiatrist to have it treated.

Diabetes

Making sure you have good control of your diabetes will help you feel better, and reduce the risk of you developing problems with your feet.

Get to know your feet! How do they feel? What feels right and what doesn't? Be confident that if something doesn't feel right with your feet, no matter how small, that you tell a parent or carer so that they can get it checked for you by a Podiatrist.

Good foot health is really important for young people with diabetes and starting early and giving yourself the confidence to look after your feet will make all the difference as you get older.

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Top Tips

for Keeping Your Feet Healthy



Wash your feet every day, remembering to get in between your toes. Dry your feet well, especially between those toes as this will prevent a build up of moisture.



Change your socks every day. Clean socks - preferably cotton - will help keep your feet fresh and again stop the build up of moisture.



Make sure your nails are cut to a good length. Never cut your nails to short or down the sides as this can cause pain and lead to problems.



Wear shoes that fit you well and give your feet good support. Your feet develop properly if your shoes support them well.



If your feet hurt or you have any sore parts on your feet then you should let a parent or carer know. Don't wait and let the pain worsen.

Shoes – Supporting Your Feet

Shoes aren't just about protecting your feet from the weather and the hazards of walking outdoors. Shoes (footwear) should give your feet good support which will then help your feet, and the muscles and bones within them, develop properly.

Choosing and wearing good footwear can also help prevent other problems including athlete's foot, ingrown toenails and blisters.

Here are some things to consider when thinking about footwear:

- You should have room to move your toes in your shoes, but shoes shouldn't feel too big on you
- Shoes should have a good heel which gives support to your foot and will stop your foot slipping out. Good heel support stops you from curling your toes inside your shoe to keep it on. This can cause rub marks and sores on your toes.
- Shoes that have laces, buckles or velcro straps are good because they give better support to your whole foot.
- Undo laces, buckles and straps before taking your shoes off and then they are ready to tighten again when you put them back on again. Don't slip them on and off as this will also weaken the shoe and the heel.
- Don't wear shoes that are too tight or hurting your feet. Let a parent or carer know if you need new shoes.
- Choose footwear that is appropriate for the activity and also the time of year.