

## **Love your feet and take care of them with these Summer Foot Care Tips**

Nothing says 'hello spring' more than beautiful feet!

Foot care is very important and a good indicator of overall health. The following are a few tips to remind you of how to take care of yourself this spring.

### 1. Flip Flops not so Hot

Those flimsy shoes are designed to get you from the pool to the beach but not much further. They do not provide your feet a break instead that rubber sole and lack of arch support can bring about some serious problems. "The thong-style flip flop is the worse offender," says Dr. Adrienne Curry, a podiatrist in the Chicago area. "If worn constantly one will inevitably get hammertoes because of all of the extra work the toes have to do to stay in the flip-flop. If one has to wear this type of shoe – try one with a fitted and thicker (not platform!) sole, with a wide band across the top of the foot instead of a thong style."

### 2. Get Up! Get Out!

Take advantage of the nice weather by being outdoors. Physical exercise is good for overall health and circulation. If you are traveling, walking is a great way to see a new place. Make sure you wear appropriate footwear and if you can, wear different shoes from one day to the next. It is good to air out the shoes in between wear to avoid fungus growth in your shoes.

### 3. Speaking of Air...

Everybody's foot sweats and maybe smells a little too. Stinky feet are another issue entirely that may require a doctor's attention. Not wearing socks, certain footwear or highly sweaty types are more likely to encounter this problem. Sweat is sterile but fungus or bacteria are the culprits. To eliminate this problem, a simple footbath with tea can do the trick. A footbath with apple cider vinegar may also be beneficial.

### 4. Show your Feet Some TLC

Soak your feet at the end of the day in a warm footbath for ten minutes. Dry off your feet and scrub the heel to get rid of dry skin. Make sure your feet are fully dry and apply a foot lotion to the foot especially the heel, but not in between the toes. Keep your toenails trimmed but not too short to avoid ingrown toenails.

### 5. Leave the Toes out to Dry.

Suntan lotion and moisturizer are great -- just not in between the toes. This offers fungus a good place to grow during the warm months. It is especially true as this area is not quick to dry and your foot is sweating in the heat.

Thick moisturizers should really be kept to your heel area and away from your toes. Avoiding petroleum-based moisturizers would be ideal. These types of moisturizers tend to coat the feet and do not allow the skin to 'breathe' therefore, becoming a breeding ground for all kinds of fungus, yeasts or bacteria on the skin.

## 6. Give Your Feet a 'Cure

With summer shoe styles and your feet more likely to be on display – it is time for a pedicure. When wearing open toe and airy sandals and walking around city streets, you are more likely to get your feet roughed up with a tough dry heel. Bacteria can breed under the cracked surface. Always check to make sure the establishment and employees are certified and are exercising sanitary practices.

## 7. The Reflex

Try something new and book yourself a reflexology appointment. This applied pressure technique style foot massage has major benefits not only for your feet but also for other body parts and organs that are suffering from discomfort and pain. It has been used for thousands of years as an all-over cure-all. And it feels great!

It is important to take care of yourself. Your feet are your foundation and they connect you to the earth. Show them some tender loving care and they will serve you well in return. Make sure to talk to a specialist if you have any concerns and love the feet you're in!

*Shani Scherenzel is a reflexologist working in the Toronto area. She can be reached through her website at <http://www.goshani.com>*