

## General Foot Health Advice

Good hygiene is essential for healthy feet. Wash and dry your feet thoroughly each day, especially in-between the toes. If you struggle to dry in between the toes, surgical spirit (a tiny amount wiped in between using a tissue or cotton bud) can help to dry this area.

Debris (dry skin, sock fluff etc.), can compact down the sides of the nails.

Whilst washing your feet, a toothbrush can be used to gently brush away debris. A separate toothbrush to the one you (or a family member) use on your teeth is recommended.

Apply small amounts of olive oil (using a cotton bud or similar) around the cuticles and nail edge. This will help to prevent a build-up of hard, dry skin down the sides. It will also help to hydrate dry nails/cuticles.

If cutting nails follow the natural contour of the nail. Filing nails gently using an emery board once or twice a week, will reduce the need to cut the nails as frequently. Do not cut your toenails too short or cut down the sides of the nails. This can result in painful, ingrown toenails.

Do not pick nails or the skin around them. This can create an entry for bacteria and risk infection.

Regular filing of any hard, dry skin using an emery board, is recommended to prevent it building up as quickly. We advise doing this when your skin is dry, before a bath/shower and before applying any cream. Filing skin when it is damp can result in too much skin being removed and make the skin sore.

Apply moisturising cream to the feet daily to prevent skin becoming dry and cracked. Do not apply cream in between the toes as this area can be moist already. If you struggle to reach your feet to apply cream, use an old flannel (or similar) to put cream on and then rub your feet on the flannel. We recommend putting socks on to ensure you do not slip after applying cream, or sit with the feet up long enough to let the cream absorb (5-10mins).

Rotate footwear regularly. We have approx. 250,000 sweat glands in our feet and perspire approx. ½ a pint of sweat a day from them. Rotating footwear gives shoes time to dry out and helps to prevent issues such as bacterial or fungal infections of the skin and nails.

Wear shoes that fit correctly. Shoes that are too tight or too loose can cause long term foot problems. Shop for shoes at the end of the day to compensate for foot swelling that may occur later in the day.

Avoid slip on shoes and shoes that are wide and deep enough to allow 'wobble room' for the toes in the front of the shoe. It is advised to have around 1-2cm room from the top of your longest toe to the top of your shoe.

Check your feet daily for any changes to skin colour, cuts, cracks to the skin, or problems with your nails not previously noticed.

**REMEMBER foot pain or discomfort is not normal. If you have any concerns please seek help and advice from your podiatrist.**



## Putting Your Feet First

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