

# Treat Your Feet Right

Our feet keep us going throughout our busy lives. They are the key to being mobile and independent.

It's easy to take our feet for granted. They're just there, putting up with a host of challenges, from being jammed into high heels and elevated to unnatural heights to smothering inside sweaty socks or tight nylon pantyhose.

Our feet take hundreds of kilos of impact forces just during an average day of walking. That pounding explains why feet are the body part most likely to get injured.



## Here are some great tips on how to look after feet so they keeping you going for many years to come:

- Make a point to wash your feet (and between your toes!) with a washcloth carefully and regularly. Yes, that means bending over in the shower to soap them up; if you can't balance safely, use a long-handled shower brush or sit on a chair outside the tub as you wash your feet under the faucets. Be sure to dry feet completely, including between the toes. This wash-and-dry system lessens problems such as athlete's foot, odour, bacteria and fungus.
- If you like to soak your feet, forget the Epsom salts—they're too drying and don't offer any medical benefit. Instead, just use warm (never hot) water and a little liquid soap, such as handwashing solution, containing skin softeners.
- Moisturise your feet after washing. During hot summer and dry-skin winter months, you may want to moisturise several times a day. Nothing fancy is needed: basic lotions and creams are fine. Cracked heels are a common problem in summer and in most cases they could be prevent with regular moisturising.
- Alternate the shoes you wear each day. That may mean having two pairs of your favourite everyday style, but shoes need time to air out to avoid triggering foot odour or infections.
- Your feet should not hurt—ever. Tight shoes can worsen bunions, distort toe shape and cause painful corns and callous. If you wear high heels, choose heels that are wide, stable and no higher than 5 cms. Toe boxes should be wide; pointed toes shouldn't begin their narrowing shape until well past the ball of the foot. To protect your Achilles tendon from shortening, alternate heel heights regularly.
- Flip-flops, thongs ballet shoes and completely flat shoes don't provide support. Neither does walking barefoot. Women are especially prone to developing flat feet, which can lead to other foot problems. To keep feet strong and healthy, minimise the amount of time you wear shoes that lack support.
- Pregnancy, aging and diabetes all affect your feet. Pregnant women need shoes with broad heels, arch support and good shock absorbency. Added pregnancy weight may cause your shoe size to change, so get your feet measured. Older women lose some of the cushioning fat on the balls of their feet; choose shoes that provide more shock protection. Diabetics can develop serious conditions related to the feet and lower legs. Check feet for any problems daily and see a podiatrist at least annually.
- Be cautious about having a pedicure in a salon, where cleanliness of tubs and instruments is vital. Poorly trained staff can cause injury and infection. Nail and fungal infections are easily transmitted if strict standards are not maintained.

*This information is of a general nature and should not replace individual professional advice. For individual advice it is recommended that consult a Podiatrist or General Practitioner.*



[www.podiatrywa.com.au](http://www.podiatrywa.com.au)  
[info@podiatrywa.com.au](mailto:info@podiatrywa.com.au)