

Summer Feet

We need to look after our feet throughout the year, however summertime and holidays mean we need to think a little differently about our foot health.

Our shoes are the environment our feet live in and warmer and hopefully drier weather means the environment in our shoes can get hotter and more humid. In enclosed shoes, a warm summer day for us can feel like a rainforest trek to our feet. After a few consecutive days wear, a pair of shoes can be literally soaked to the skin.

We should aim to wear a fresh pair of shoes every day, some sandals and some enclosed shoes, ensuring the recently worn shoes are left open to allow them to dry properly.

Trainers should be opened up completely with the tongue lifted and any removable insoles removed to allow proper drying of the whole shoe especially the toe box.

Sandals worn without socks should be allowed a day or two of rest too. If the material allows, wiping over the foot bed with an anti-bacterial surface spray before drying can help to cut down on smelly sandal syndrome.

It might seem obvious but daily washing and thorough drying of our feet is crucial too. Drying between out toes can be overlooked but is very important, use a soft towel or consider 'flossing' between toes with a soft facial tissue. Not only does this keep them clean and odour free but allows us to examine our feet for blisters, breaks in the skin or excessive wetness between the toes.

Toenails should be kept well trimmed as we do throughout the year, and skin moisturised regularly, especially around the heels where dry skin can build when wearing sandals.

Walking barefoot is great, but injury is easy so take care when and where you walk without shoes. Those of us with diabetes should avoid walking barefoot at anytime.

If you experience problems with your feet; pain, blisters, itching, skin cracks and ingrowing toenails, to name a few, seek advice quickly from your local podiatrist, GP or pharmacist to stop simple problems becoming more serious.

Enjoy the summer and your holidays, and remember to spare a thought and some time for your feet.

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