

Ask The Podiatrist

Cool Tips For Warm-Weather Foot Care

(NAPSA)—If you're like most people, you take 8,000 to 10,000 steps a day. Here are 12 more steps you can take to keep your feet in good shape, especially during the warmer months:

1. Sunny days and warm nights may encourage wearing flip-flops, but it's a good idea to get the kind made of high-quality, soft leather to minimize the potential for blisters. Make sure your foot doesn't hang over the edge and beware of irritation where the toe thong fits. It can lead to blisters and infections. Don't wear flip-flops to play sports, do yard work or walk long distances.

2. Keep your feet healthy with a waterproof, oil-free sunscreen every time you wear sandals outdoors.

3. Dr. Kathleen Stone, president of the American Podiatric Medical Association, says, "Pampering and grooming your feet promotes good foot hygiene and should be done frequently to contribute not only to your foot health in warmer weather but also to your body's overall health." Try soaking your feet for at least five minutes in a bucket of cool water.

4. Use a foot file or pumice stone to gently smooth the skin around the heel and the balls and sides of your feet.

5. Gently push back cuticles with a cuticle pusher or manicure stick. Cuticles provide a protective barrier against infection and should never be cut.

6. To prevent fungal infections, and viruses that cause warts, wash your feet daily with soap and water, drying carefully, especially between the toes.



7. Change your shoes regularly.

8. Avoid walking barefoot, particularly in public showers and locker rooms. Bare feet are exposed to plantar warts and athlete's foot.

9. To prevent hot, sweaty feet and foot odor, rub cornstarch or roll-on antiperspirant directly on the soles of your feet.

10. Use a nail clipper to cut toenails straight across. Then, use an emery board to smooth the nail edges by filing in one direction without drastically rounding the edges. When toenail edges are rounded, it increases the chances for painful ingrown toenails.

11. Consult a podiatrist if you have any foot pain or other problems affecting your feet. Podiatrists, explains Dr. Stone, are uniquely qualified to diagnose and treat conditions of the foot and ankle.

12. For more information about foot care or to find a podiatrist near you, visit www.apma.org.