



HEALTH AWARENESS

Five Myths About Foot Care

(NAPSA)—“Don’t cross your eyes, they’ll stay that way!”

Old wives’ tales and myths like that example are easy to laugh at. But some myths are mistaken for fact. Here are five common myths that doctors with the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS) hear from their patients:

MYTH: If you have an ingrown toenail, cut a notch (a “V”) in the nail to relieve the pain.

REALITY: Cutting a “V” does not relieve the pain of an ingrown toenail. It does not affect the downward, curved growth of a toenail. It may actually cause more problems and is painful in many cases.

MYTH: If you can walk on an injured foot, it isn’t broken.

REALITY: It is possible to walk on a broken foot or ankle, depending on the severity of the injury and your threshold for pain. Not only can walking on a broken foot make the injury worse, it can also lead to serious complications. Stay off an injured foot until it’s examined by a foot and ankle surgeon.

MYTH: Shoes cause bunions.

REALITY: Wearing shoes that crowd the toes together can, over time, make bunions more painful. But shoes themselves do not cause bunions.

Bunions are most often caused by an inherited, faulty mechanical structure of the foot. It is not the bunion itself that is inherited, but certain foot types that make a person prone to developing a bunion. Only surgery can correct a bunion.

MYTH: A doctor can’t fix a broken toe.



Some myths are funny. But foot myths can cause serious pain.

REALITY: Broken toes that aren’t treated may develop arthritis or become deformed, making wearing shoes and walking difficult. If the broken toe is out of alignment, a foot and ankle surgeon may insert a pin, screw or plate to reposition the bone.

MYTH: Corns have roots.

REALITY: A corn is a small buildup of skin caused by friction. Many corns result from a hammertoe deformity, where the toe knuckle rubs against the shoe. The only way to eliminate these corns is to surgically correct the hammertoe condition.

Attempting to cut off a corn by yourself, or applying medicated corn pads, can lead to serious infection or even amputation.

For more foot care myths, visit the ACFAS consumer Web site, FootPhysicians.com.