
Improving Quality of Life

April is Foot Health Awareness Month

Did You Know...?

- The average person walks the equivalent of five times around the earth in a lifetime.
- Women have four times as many foot problems than men.
- The foot contains 26 bones, 33 joints, 107 ligaments, and 19 muscles.



Years of wear and tear can be hard on your feet. As well as disease, poor circulation, improper nail trimming and shoes that don't fit properly. Problems with

our feet can be the first sign of more serious medical conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, and nerve and circulatory disorders.

Ways to Prevent Foot Trouble

- ★ Check your feet regularly
- ★ Elevating feet to keep blood circulating
- ★ Wear comfortable shoes that fit properly (avoid pressure from shoes)
- ★ Don't sit for long periods of time
- ★ No smoking

Some Types of Foot Problems

- ☞ Dry skin
- ☞ Ingrown toenail
- ☞ Arthritis
- ☞ Foot ulcers (Diabetic)

Skin holds a certain amount of water which is needed to allow the skin to withstand different types of pressure.

Dry Skin is caused from decreased amount of water causing skin to be itchy, scaling, red and chapped. It can also cause cracks and fissures, which are openings that can allow bacteria to penetrate the skin which could lead to infection.

Ingrown toenail is when the nail penetrates the skin, which often results in infection. The main symptom is pain. To prevent this, make sure to cut toenails straight across.

Arthritis is inflammation and increased fluid in the joints, which increases with age. One type is **Gout**, which usually affects the big toe joint. It is an acute problem, usually within 12-24 hours swelling is noted. There is no treatment for the attack and it usually resolves within 1 week. This primarily affects men. Seen more in those with high levels of uric acid (found in red meats, shellfish, and beans) and is hereditary. The best management is rest and elevation of the foot.

Rheumatoid is the most serious form of arthritis which affects the ankles mostly. Symptoms include morning stiffness, fatigue, and weight loss. Treatment includes physical therapy and/or medication. Aspirin is the drug of choice.

What if I am Diabetic...?

- ☞ Wash and inspect feet daily
- ☞ See a podiatrist for nail care
- ☞ Always wear fitted shoes
- ☞ Exercise

National Institute on Aging
1-800-222-2225

Source: Foot Care www.nih.gov, www.apma.org

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