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Foot Health Tips For Everyone From a Professional Podiatrist

Foot Health Tips For Everyone From a Professional Podiatrist When people think of their overall health, their feet are seldom uppermost in their minds. But when things go wrong, they are forcibly reminded of just how important their feet are to their overall well being. If someone has checked all the healthy lifestyle boxes and still haven't considered their feet, it's time to take action. Luckily, taking good care of one's feet isn't an onerous or time-consuming business. People should consider visiting a podiatrist for a check-up, and use these common-sense tips from Sydney podiatrist Mark Lin to keep their feet healthy and happy.

Protect Your Feet From Fungal Infections Fungi that feed on skin and nails can be really hard to get rid of once you have them. Prevention, says Lin, is better than cure. That means keeping your feet clean and drying them well after bathing, swimming, or showering. The warm, dark spaces between your toes are favourites for fungi – especially if they're moist. Drying between your toes only takes a couple of minutes and will help to keep the feet healthy.

But, no matter how well toes are dried, the wrong socks can encourage sweating. "Some of the artificial fibres being used in socks these days are designed to keep toes and feet dry. The makers will usually indicate this on the packaging since it's an important selling point for them," says Lin. "Your choice of footwear can also help to keep your feet dry. Avoid wearing "sweaty" shoes. Leather is usually a good option, and open shoes or shoes made of mesh fabrics are the most breathable of all."

Fungal spores are often left behind by people who are already infected, so Lin recommends wearing flip-flops when using public showers and change rooms. By the same token, people shouldn't wear other people's shoes or buy second-hand ones.

Keep tabs on your toenails too. If they are discoloured, inclined to crumble, or have thickened areas, you may have a nail fungus. Nail polish conceals the problem, but it will aggravate it. "You need to treat the fungal infection, not hide it," he warns.

Read: Chatswood Sydney Central Sports Podiatrist Feet Pain Treatment No Foot Orthotics

Choose the Right Shoes While people may take their chances with footwear on special occasions just because it looks smart, they shouldn't make a habit of it. "Unfortunately, a lot of high-fashion shoe designs are not conducive to healthy feet," explains Lin. "Many of my patients are people who were in the habit of wearing shoes that constricted their feet. Unfortunately, that has left them with foot problems that will take a long time, or even surgery, to correct. Day-to-day footwear should fit well and not squeeze your toes, and while high heels are pretty, the ones you most often wear should have "sensible" rather than "killer" heels."

The bottom line is that if a person's feet or legs hurt while they are wearing shoes or after you removed them, that's a sure sign that you need to rethink their footwear choices. "You'll be surprised at the difference it makes," says Lin. "You'll suffer less from pain and general fatigue and you might notice this as being in a better mood and feeling more energetic. At the same time, you'll be heading off problems like bunions, corns, calluses, and ingrown toenails."

Feet Should be Inspected Daily If a person is paying special attention to drying their feet, a daily inspection doesn't require any special effort. Look for anything that doesn't seem normal: lumps and bumps, scaly patches of skin, inflammation or sores, and nails that look yukky even though they are clean. Diabetics must take special care, since foot ulcers can present a serious problem.

"If you spot anything odd about your feet, don't hesitate to find out about treatment. The idea of daily checks is to pick up problems while they are still minor – they'll be a lot more difficult to take care of if you let them get bad before seeking help," he explains. "You're not going to seek treatment for every little problem, but if it persists, you may need prescription medicines or intervention from a podiatrist."

Read: Sydney Sports Podiatrist Nail Bracing Feet Ingrown Toenail Nail Pathology Deformity Foot Pronation

Better than Waiting for Pain: Podiatrist Check-ups as Part of Your Healthcare Routine While pain makes itself felt in no uncertain terms, and though lumps and bumps are easy to spot, subtler symptoms might be the warning that a person needs help.

"Pain is not an accurate indication of the actual underlying problems in the feet. Pain often happens as a result of long-term compensation for functional or movement issues in the body," warns Lin. "It is important to address any minor symptom before it causes more damage. It's like maintaining your car, it should be serviced regularly to keep it in good working order and optimise its performance before any problems arise. Your feet are no different – except that you can't replace them in the same way you can replace a car."

"Many of our clients aren't experiencing pain when they come to us. It's because they feel something is just 'not right' or they simply come in for a check-up in the same way that people visit a dentist to make sure their teeth are OK. In many instances, we are able to detect the areas of the lower limb that are affecting movement or performance, or areas that could cause bigger problems in the future. We are able to address those if we can detect the problems early to avoid permanent damage. Since damage may be irreversible by the time pain comes to us, it's better to be proactive about foot health management."

A podiatrist won't look at a person askance because they're just asking for a check-up. If they're in the Sydney area and are looking for a healthcare professional to assess their foot and lower limb health, Mark Lin's team at Footwork Podiatry Clinic are the choice to help them get moving towards better mobility and improved foot health.

For further information, visit the The Footwork Clinic – Leading Sports, Podiatry, Foot And Lower Limb Corrective Services to book online, or call Mark Lin or his friendly team on +61 2 9131 6891.

Want a faster response or ask us a quick question?

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