



My Chicago Foot Expert.com
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Newsletter

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Do's and Don'ts for Keeping Feet Healthy

April is Foot Health Awareness Month. Most of us take our feet for granted until they hurt or have another issue that prevents them from functioning properly. Healthy feet are essential for standing, walking, and other daily activities. Taking good care of your feet isn't hard. Below are some do's and don'ts to help you improve your foot health.

Do: Stick to a basic foot care routine. Wash feet daily with soap and water and dry thoroughly. Apply foot powder in the morning and a rich moisturizer at night right before bed.

Do: Examine your feet regularly. Nearly all foot disorders are best treated in their earliest stages. All pain, unusual sensations (such as burning or tingling), and any changes in the appearance of the foot, skin, or toenails should be reported promptly to your podiatrist.

Don't: Cut toenails too short. Avoid rounding the edges as well. Improper trimming is the primary cause of ingrown toenails.

Do: Go shoe shopping! Wearing well-made shoes that fit properly is one of the most important predictors of good foot health. Shoes have a lifespan. Discard any shoes that hurt your feet or have visible signs of damage, worn-out treads, or stretched-out heel counters. Even if walking and running shoes still look okay, remember that they begin to break down internally after about 300-500 miles. Continuing to use shoes past their prime can result in foot pain and injuries.

Do: Keep feet dry. Allowing feet to sit in wet or sweaty shoes significantly increases your risk of foot infections such as athlete's foot and toenail fungus. It's also a good idea to rotate your footwear and avoid wearing the same pair for several days to give shoes a chance to air out.

Don't: Perform any "bathroom surgeries" on your feet. Trying to cut out an ingrown toenail or shave off a callus is a surefire shortcut to a foot injury and infection. Ditto for following folk remedies such as sticking a wad of cotton between nail and nail bed or using harsh, over-the-counter products to remove warts. Leave the care of your feet in the hands of professionals! Your podiatrist is a highly trained specialist who has spent many years in school and completed extensive medical training.



Spring Into Warm Weather Sports

For weekend warriors and young athletes, spring sports are about to start up. To ensure an injury-free season and a high performance on the field, track, or court, it's necessary to do some advanced preparation.

From Couch to Conditioning

If you have been less active during the winter months, it's essential that you begin increasing your physical activity level. Expecting to jump back into your spring sport at the same level you were at the end of last season is inviting pain and injury. Start with walking and basic conditioning exercises. If you or your child are participating in a team sport, ask the coach for workout suggestions. Take a few weeks to gradually build up the intensity and duration of your activity.



Gear Check

A safe season starts with inspecting all equipment and protective gear for your sport or activity and ensuring everything is in good condition and free of damage or excessive wear. Of course, for any exercise or sport, your shoes are a key piece of gear. Buy shoes specifically made for the activity you are doing. Young athletes should get their feet measured, so the correct size sports shoes are purchased each season. Don't use hand-me-downs or secondhand sports shoes—they conform to the foot of the original owner and may cause pain or injury to a new user.

Ask the Podiatrist

The start of a new sports season is also an excellent time to schedule a checkup with your podiatrist, especially if you have had a foot injury in the past or are currently dealing with a chronic disorder such as plantar fasciitis or Achilles tendonitis. The foot doctor will examine your feet and assess any current conditions. Your podiatrist can make recommendations regarding sports footwear and modifications you may want to consider for your exercise routine that will decrease the risk of injury, protect vulnerable areas of your feet and improve your game.



Recipe of the Month

Mediterranean Pasta Salad

You'll love this easy pasta salad recipe! It's a great one to make ahead - if you're bringing it to a picnic, prep it up to a day in advance.

Ingredients

- 3 cups uncooked fusilli pasta
- 2 heaping cups of halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 ½ cups cooked chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups arugula
- 1 cup Persian cucumbers, sliced into thin half moons
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 cup basil leaves, torn
- ½ cup minced parsley
- ½ cup chopped mint
- ¼ cup toasted pine nuts

Dressing

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, more for drizzling
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon of herbs de Provence, or dried Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ¾ teaspoon sea salt

Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Prepare the pasta according to the package directions, or until slightly past al dente.
2. Meanwhile, make the dressing. In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, mustard, garlic, herbs de Provence, red pepper flakes, and salt. (Note: the dressing will have a strong flavor. It'll mellow once it coats all of the pasta salad ingredients).
3. Drain the pasta, toss it with a little olive oil (so that it doesn't stick together), and let it cool to room temp. Transfer to a large bowl with the tomatoes, chickpeas, arugula, cucumbers, feta cheese, basil, parsley, mint, and pine nuts. Pour the dressing and toss to coat. Season to taste with more lemon, salt, pepper, and/or a drizzle of olive oil, if desired, and serve.

Recipe and photo courtesy of loveandlemons.com/pasta-salad



April Fun Facts

- April also had 29 days, but a 30th day was added when Julius Caesar established the Julian calendar.
- In the Southern Hemisphere, April is the seasonal equivalent of October.
- For all the car enthusiasts out there, Ford unveiled their first Mustang on April 17, 1964, costing \$2,368.
- On April 15, 1912, the famous Titanic ship hit an iceberg and sank on her first and only voyage.

April Special Days - Mark Your Calendar!

April 18 – National Heritage Day

April 22 – Earth Day

April 28 – World Day for Safety and Health at Work

April 29 – National Arbor Day

April 29 – International Dance Day

Trivia

Which of the following have flat feet?

- A. Ballerinas
- B. Football players
- C. Babies
- D. Law enforcement officers

Answer: C



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Meet our Doctor



Stavros Alexopoulos, DPM

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