

Six Tips for Healthy Holiday Feet

Sore, achy feet should not ruin your holiday season. Follow these six tips to keep your feet healthy and holiday-ready.



1. If the shoe fits, wear it. When hitting the dance floor or shopping malls this holiday season, do not compromise comfort and safety when picking out the right shoes to wear. Narrow shoes, overly high-heeled ones or shoes not worn very often, such as dress shoes, can irritate feet and lead to blisters, calluses, swelling and even severe ankle injuries. Choose a shoe that has a low heel and fits your foot in length, width and depth while you are standing.

2. Do not overindulge in holiday cheer. Did you know your feet can feel the effects of too much holiday cheer? Certain foods and beverages high in purines, such as shellfish, red meat, red wine and beer, can trigger extremely painful gout attacks, a condition in which uric acid builds up and crystallizes in and around your joints. The big toe is usually affected first since the toe is the coolest part of the body, and uric acid is sensitive to temperature changes.

3. Be safety-conscious about pedicures. Nail salons can be a breeding ground for bacteria, including MRSA. To reduce your risk of infection during a pedicure, choose a salon that follows proper sanitation practices and is licensed by the state. Also consider purchasing your own pedicure instruments to bring along to your appointment.

4. Watch for ice and snow. Holiday winter wonderlands can be beautiful but also dangerous. Use caution when traveling outdoors, and watch for ice or snow patches along your trail. The ankle joint can be more vulnerable to serious injury from falling on ice. If you experience a fall, take a break from activities until you can be seen by a foot and ankle surgeon in our office. Use RICE therapy (Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation) to help reduce pain and control swelling around the injury.

5. Protect your feet from cold temperatures. Wear insulated, water-resistant boots and moisture-wicking socks to prevent frostbite, chilblains—an inflammation of the small blood vessels in the hands or feet when they are exposed to cold air—or other cold weather-related injuries to the feet and toes.

6. Listen to your feet. Inspect your feet regularly for any evidence of ingrown toenails, bruising, swelling, blisters, dry skin or calluses. If you notice any pain, swelling or signs of problems, make an appointment with our office.

Snowboarders: Be Sensible on the Slopes

Before hitting the slopes this winter, snowboarders should know they are more susceptible to foot and ankle injuries than skiers.

Snowboard boots are more flexible than ski boots, which means midfoot and ankle sprains are more likely to occur because the boot's flexibility allows for more impact at the tip of the toes.

Our office recommends that snowboarders wear stiffer boots to better protect the ankle and more firmly hold the foot in position.

Should you suffer a foot or ankle injury while playing a winter

sport, seek emergency care and then follow up with our office.



Do a Midyear Performance Check on Your Children's Feet

While your kids may have made it halfway through the school year, their shoes may have not.

Kids' feet can grow up to two sizes in six months. Signs of too-tight shoes include blisters, corns and calluses on the toes, blisters on the back of the heels or ingrown toenails. Also check shoes for wear and tear since they can lose shock absorption over time.

If you need to buy new shoes for your child, choose a pair that has a little, but not too much, room for growth. Aim for about a finger's width of space between your child's big toe and the front of the shoe. Be careful not to buy shoes that are too big because oversized shoes can cause the foot to slide forward, putting pressure on the toes.

The shoes should also have a toe box wide enough to accommodate your child's feet, adequate cushioning and shock absorption. If your child has flat feet, look for shoes that provide arch support.

Call our office to schedule an appointment if your child has any trouble walking or running or has foot pain despite wearing properly fitting shoes.

