

Happy Feet: 10 Tips For Maintaining Healthy Feet



The human foot is a marvel of biomechanical engineering that most of us take for granted until the system fails or breaks down. The average person will walk the equivalent of twice around the world in a lifetime, which is a long time on your feet.

Podiatrists offer the following tips for maintaining healthy feet and avoiding complications.

10 Tips to Maintain Healthy Feet

1. Inspect your feet regularly and pay attention to changes in color, texture or appearance.
2. Maintain good foot hygiene, including washing and drying between the toes.
3. Hydrate the skin. Hot weather and open shoes can cause rapid loss of moisture from the skin and may result in cracking or the formation of fissures. It is helpful to replace the moisture content by using lotions or creams on a regular basis.
4. Buy proper-size shoes. You may not wear the same size in shoes made by different manufacturers. Purchase new shoes late in the day, when feet tend to be at their largest. Always buy the shoes that feel the best.
5. Don't ignore foot pain. Symptoms that increase or do not resolve within a reasonable period of time need to be evaluated by your podiatric physician.
6. Cut toenails straight across. Never cut into the corner - this could cause an ingrown toenail. Gently file away sharp corners or rough edges with an emery board.
7. Exercise. Walking is a great way to keep weight under control and is an excellent conditioner for the feet. Be sure to wear appropriate athletic shoes when exercising.
8. Alternate your shoes each day. Since the feet have sweat glands, your shoes will absorb moisture from your feet, so it is important to allow your shoes to dry out completely.
9. Avoid walking barefoot to help protect your feet from injury and infection.
10. Put sunblock on your feet while wearing sandals during the day to avoid sunburn.



Tips for Buying Sports Eye Protectors

Prevent Blindness America recommends that athletes wear sports eyeguards when participating in sports.

Prescription glasses, sunglasses and even occupational safety glasses do not provide adequate protection. Sports eyeguards come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Eyeguards designed for use in racquet sports are now commonly used for basketball and soccer and in combination with helmets in football, hockey and baseball. The eyeguards you choose should fit securely and comfortably and allow the use of a helmet if necessary. Expect to spend between \$20 and \$40 for a pair of regular eyeguards and \$60 or more for eyeguards with prescription lenses.



The following guidelines can help you find a pair of eyeguards right for you:

- If you wear prescription glasses, ask your eye doctor to fit you for prescription eyeguards. If you're a monocular athlete (a person with only one eye that sees well), ask your eye doctor what sports you can safely participate in. Monocular athletes should always wear sports eyeguards.
- Buy eyeguards at sports specialty stores or optical stores. At the sports store, ask for a sales representative who's familiar with eye protectors to help you.

- Don't buy sports eyeguards without lenses. Only "lensed" protectors are recommended for sports use. Make sure the lenses either stay in place or pop outward in the event of an accident. Lenses that pop in against your eyes can be very dangerous.
- Fogging of the lenses can be a problem when you're active. Some eyeguards are available with anti-fog coating. Others have side vents for additional ventilation. Try on different types to determine which is most comfortable for you.
- Check the packaging to see if the eye protector you select has been tested for sports use. Also check to see that the eye protector is made of polycarbonate material. Polycarbonate eyeguards are the most impact resistant.
- Sports eyeguards should be padded or cushioned along the brow and bridge of the nose. Padding will prevent the eyeguards from cutting your skin.
- Try on the eye protector to determine if it's the right size. Adjust the strap and make sure it's not too tight or too loose. If you purchased your eyeguards at an optical store, an optical representative can help you adjust the eye protector for a comfortable fit.
- Until you get used to wearing a pair of eyeguards, it may feel strange, but bear with it! It's a lot more comfortable than an eye injury.

April is National Autism Awareness Month



Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. There is no known single cause for autism, but increased awareness and funding can help families today.

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued their Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring report. The report concluded that the prevalence of autism had risen to 1 in every 110 births in the United States and almost 1 in 70 boys. The issuance of this report caused a media uproar, but the news was not a surprise to the Autism Society or to the 1.5 million Americans living with the effects of autism spectrum disorder. Nonetheless, the spotlight shown on autism as a result of the prevalence increase opens opportunities for the nation to consider how to serve these families facing a lifetime of support for their children.

Currently, the Autism Society estimates that the lifetime cost of caring for a child with autism ranges from \$3.5 million to \$5 million, and that the United States is facing almost \$90 billion annually in costs for autism (this figure includes research, insurance costs and non-covered expenses, Medicaid waivers for autism, educational spending, housing, transportation, employment, and related therapeutic services and caregiver costs).
