

You should avoid slip-on shoes and slippers. Ask for our “Choosing The Right Footwear” leaflet for more information.

Professional Healthcare from a Podiatrist

Access to NHS Podiatry locally is limited to patients with very specific medical and podiatric needs. You can find details of what conditions we can treat on our website given at the bottom of this page.

If you are not eligible to receive Podiatry through the NHS you should ensure that any Podiatrist you do consult is registered with the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC). You can do this by telephoning the Registration Department on 0300 500 6184, or you can check online at www.hcpc-uk.org

Further Advice

For advice on the treatment of a range of conditions, visit the NHS website at www.nhs.uk

The leading professional body for HCPC registered chiropodists and podiatrists in the UK, the Royal College of Podiatry has a wide range on information available both on-line and printed. For more information visit www.rcpod.org.uk or call 020 7234 8620

If you have any questions regarding the information in this leaflet, please contact Podiatry Services

Further information about the service and how to manage a range of foot health problems yourself, can also be found on our website: www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/project/podiatry

Contact Details

Podiatry Services
Beauchamp Centre
Mount Gould Hospital
200 Mount Gould Road
Plymouth
PL4 7QD

Tel: 01752 434855 Email: livewell.podiatrypatients@nhs.net

www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk

Podiatry Services Patient Information Leaflet



Basic Foot Care Advice

(March 2023)

Everyday advice about how to care for your feet and prevent common problems

We support people to lead independent, healthy lives

Good foot care increases your comfort, mobility and independence but some people have difficulty in managing their own basic foot care. Even reaching your feet can prove difficult for some but there are easy to do alternatives that usually get around the problem of managing your foot care. This information is intended to help you to help yourself and avoid the need to rely on others as much as possible.

General Foot Care and Hygiene

Following these simple rules will help prevent basic foot problems:

- Wash and inspect your feet daily
- Dry your feet thoroughly especially between the toes where moisture may become trapped
- Use a moisturiser daily on your feet but do not put it between your toes. Try water based products for dry skin or an oil-based product for hard skin such as petroleum jelly but avoid putting it between your toes. Heel balms are useful for dry areas on the borders of your feet.
- Do not use talc as a substitute for drying properly and avoid using medicated powders unless a health professional advises you to
- Use a small amount of Surgical Spirit in between toes for “sweaty feet” – avoiding broken skin
- Wear clean hosiery and change them daily
- Avoid hosiery that is tight around the leg, ankle or toes

Nail Care

If you have mobility or balance issues always ensure you are in a safe position when cutting your toenails – for example, do not balance yourself on the edge of the bath. When the toenails need cutting, do this after bathing when nails are softer:

- Cut nails to follow the natural line of the end of the toe – essentially straight
- Do not cut down the sides of the nail grooves but allow them to grow forward free from the groove
- Ensure some of the free white edge is still showing
- Do not try to cut the whole nail in one go, use a gradual “nipping” action instead

When cutting your toenails **NEVER** :

- Cut your nails too short
- Use a sharp instrument to clean the free edge or the nail grooves
- Leave sharp corners
- Cut a “V” in nails to “cure ingrowing toenails” – it does not work and can cause further problems

Filing Your Nails

If you cannot reach your feet well enough to cut them safely, try filing them once a week instead or ask a carer or relative to help you. Always do this when your nails are hard and dry. Use a sturdy emery board or one of the long handled files you can buy in chemists. This will make reaching them easier and is a safer way to do it. Follow these simple steps:

- Always file from the top of the nail in a downward direction (away from you) using single strokes
- File the edge of the nail to remove sharp corners but do not file down into the sides
- Help reduce nail thickness by gently filing the top of the nail

Callus and “Corns”

Callus (plaques of hard thick yellowish skin) can form to protect our feet. If you have this on your feet and it causes you no pain, do not worry about it – it is doing its job.

If however, you experience pain or discomfort, use a pumice stone or foot file to thin down the callus, being careful not to overdo it – you should not aim to remove it all. You should do this on a regular basis to prevent it “building up”. Daily application of a Heel balm to dry, hard skin on the bottom or borders of the feet can help reduce problems like painful build-up or splits in the skin.

Footwear

Footwear can cause a lot of the problems people associate with feet like corns and callus on toes. You should wear well-fitting shoes with a fastening, broad deep toe-box, a soft upper, and a cushioned sole.