

Footwear

- Poorly fitting shoes can cause many common foot problems so it is important to make sure your footwear is the correct size and shape for your feet.
- Always try and have your feet measured when buying shoes. This is best done at the end of the day when your feet are at their biggest or may be swollen.
- **Tip:** Before going to buy shoes stand barefoot on a piece of card and ask someone to draw around your foot. This can then be cut out and taken with you as a template to try in the shoe. If the card wrinkles inside the shoe then it does not have enough room in for your foot.
- Avoid slippers as they often have very little support. You are better wearing a light shoe with a proper fastening in the house.

A suitable shoe should have:

- Minimal heel height
- Deep/round toe box (toes should be able to wriggle within the toes box)
- Fastening – laceup or Velcro (this grips the foot and can be loosened if your feet swell at the end of the day)
- Made of soft breathable material, ideally leather

- Flexible non-slip sole
- Correct size (length and width)

For more details see:

www.healthy-footwear-guide.com

Contact information

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Daily foot care and footwear advice

 **Information for patients**
Podiatry Services



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In hospital and in the community

proud to make a difference

Daily foot hygiene, skin moisturising and regular nail filing are essential to maintaining good foot health.

Wearing suitable footwear also helps prevent many foot problems.

Daily foot hygiene

- Wash feet daily in lukewarm water, with a mild soap. Always test the temperature before putting your feet in the water.
- Dry feet well especially between your toes.
- If your skin is soggy in between your toes, apply surgical spirit each day using a cotton wool ball or cotton bud. Do not apply if your skin is broken as it will sting!
- Always change socks/tights daily and preferably wear cotton to help your skin breathe.
- Apply a moisturising cream twice daily to areas of dry skin avoiding in between your toes.
- If you have difficulty bending down, use a long handled sponge (Betterware, Wilkinsons) to apply cream. Alternatively, put some cream on a plastic bag on the floor and rub your foot on it. If you are still unable to manage ask a family member or carer to help you.

- Always rub cream well in (or leave to soak in) and avoid walking barefoot to avoid slipping.
- Suitable creams are hand cream and body butters. Flexitol cream (available from most chemists) can be used if hard skin is thickened and very dry.
- Cream may be applied before going to bed and covered with a damp sock (wear a bed sock over the top to prevent a soggy bed!).
- Small areas of hard skin/small corns may be removed safely and easily using a pumice stone or emery board/foot file weekly, followed by moisturising.
- Foot files (long handled) and emery boards are available from most chemists and some supermarkets.
- Avoid the use of hard skin/corn removing treatments/corn plasters and sharp implements as these can cause damage to your skin.
- Consult an HCPC Registered Podiatrist if the problem is painful and persists despite self care.
- Filing your nails is a lot easier and safer than trying to cut them!

Nail care

- Nails should be filed weekly by yourself or a carer/family member, using an emery board or long handled foot file. This will keep the nails at a suitable length and they should therefore not require cutting.
- Thickened nails can be filed on top to reduce the thickness and keep them comfortable.
- Fungal toenails are often discoloured and thickened and can also be filed regularly. (To help prevent the spread of the infection, do not use the same file on non-infected nails).
- If you're concerned about fungal nails your GP will be able to tell you if you are suitable to have oral medication to treat it.