

Don't Let Walking Wreak Havoc on Your Feet

Get the 411 on these common walking-related foot conditions

While walking is a great exercise, if the proper steps are not taken, such as finding the right walking shoe or starting a walking regime slowly, your feet may bare the brunt of your missteps. A recent American Podiatric Medical Association travel survey revealed that travelers spent the majority of their vacation walking, from shopping to sight-seeing. Those who admitted to wearing improper footwear on vacation experienced the most foot ailments. Whether walking at work or at play, these common foot ailments can be avoided by taking the proper precautions:



Common Condition	Warning Sign	Possible Causes	Precautions	Professional Help
Plantar Fasciitis/ Heel pain	Pain in the bottom of the heel and arch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight gain • Bony overgrowth of the heel bone • Muscle imbalance • High or low arched foot • Improper shoe gear • Excessive activity • Trauma • Stretching and inflammation of the fascia on the bottom of the foot • Tightness of the muscles on the back of the leg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm up and stretch properly before exercise • Exercise and stretch daily, and see a podiatrist for treatment options • Do not walk barefoot or in backless shoes • Wear shoes that have a strong, supportive arch and firm heel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a physical evaluation and take x-rays • Recommend padding and taping and proper shoe inserts • Prescribe orthotic devices • Administer anti-inflammatory injections • Physical therapies • Non-invasive ESWT therapy • Surgery when all else fails
Fungal Nail	Thickened, discolored, loose, or deformed toenail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Result of trauma to toenail • Could be an indication of other medical conditions such as: diabetes, arthritis, cancer, and psoriasis • Shoes and socks create a warm, dark, and humid environment which encourages fungal growth • Heredity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep shoes and socks dry as a preventative measure • Practice good foot hygiene, including daily washing of the feet with soap and water; drying feet carefully, especially between the toes • Change shoes regularly • Wear acrylic or cotton socks • Inspect toenails and trim them straight across on a regular basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a physical examination • Culture the infected nail • Prescribe appropriate medications, such as an oral anti-fungal medicine • Perform debridement or removal of the nail as needed

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Ingrown toenails, Infected toenails, Injury to the toenails	Redness, pain, swelling around the nail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoe pressure • Poor foot structure • Heredity • Improper nail trimming • Trauma • Foot deformities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect nails daily and trim toenails straight across as a preventative measure on a regular basis • Try not to wear tight-fitting socks or shoes • See a podiatrist at the first sign of a problem • If you have diabetes or circulation problems, do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a physical examination and an x-ray evaluation when necessary • Remove the ingrown portion of the nail • Prescribe appropriate topical medications or antibiotics • Perform surgical correction of the nail when needed
Blisters	A painful, fluid-filled lesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ill fitting shoes • Stiff shoes • Wrinkled socks against the skin • Excessive moisture • Foot deformities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep feet dry • Always wear socks as a cushion between your feet and shoes • Wear properly fitting shoes • Do not pop a blister, carefully open a corner of the blister closest to the bottom of the foot with a sterilized utensil like a sewing needle, drain, apply antibiotic cream and cover with a bandage immediately • Treat a mild blister with soap and water; cover it with an antiseptic ointment and protective dressing • Check blister regularly to ensure it doesn't get in- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the blister surface if needed • Prescribe appropriate medications, topical or oral • Recommend padding, dressings and friction reducing measures
Shin splints	Pain in the lower leg, on the medial (inside) or lateral (outside) of the leg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing distance, inclination, or walking time too fast • Overpronation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest, ice, and massage the lower leg at first sign of pain • Try over the counter arch supports and anti-inflammatories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate for a tibial stress fracture • Prescribe medications and anti-inflammatories • Prescribe custom orthotics
Tendoniitis	Pain along the course of a tendon or the back, front, or sides of ankles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing distance, activity, walking time • Overuse • Wearing worn out or improperly fitted shoes • Walking on hills or inclination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest • Ice • Try over the counter arch supports and anti-inflammatories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribe custom orthotics • Prescribe medications and anti-inflammatories • Recommend immobilization