

Foot Care

Healthy feet are key to being physically active, whether you're just getting started or your feet have been subject to years of wear and tear from a variety of physical activities like running, dancing, biking, or playing basketball, soccer, or tennis. Going too far, too fast or not warming up properly before physical activity can set you up for painful foot injuries.

Play it safe. Exercise your feet to increase blood flow, which is important for general foot health. Walking is a great way to exercise your feet. You can also try specific foot exercises. Sit down and rotate your ankles in one direction, then the other. In bare feet, sit in a chair and curl your toes, then spread them out. This exercise stretches and strengthens your feet and helps your balance.

Check your feet often. Look for cuts, blisters, and ingrown toenails. You can use a mirror to check the bottoms of your feet. If you have diabetes, be sure to check your feet every day.

Be kind to your feet. Take good care of them:

- Wash your feet regularly, especially between your toes. A warm foot bath is also helpful.
- Wear clean socks.
- Make sure your feet are dry before you put on your shoes.
- Wear comfortable, well-fitting shoes.
- Wear shoes when you're outside.
- To help the circulation in your feet, put them up when you're sitting. Stretching, walking, or having a gentle foot massage also helps.
- If you are sitting for a long time, stand up and move around every now and then.
- If you cross your legs when sitting, reverse or uncross them often.



Quick Tip

If you're having a problem with your feet, talk with your family doctor or see a podiatrist, a doctor who treats feet.

VISIT

www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life

- Read the *Fitness Shoes and Clothes* tip sheet.
- Learn how to add physical activity to your busy day.

www.nia.nih.gov/health

- Read the *Foot Care AgePage*.

