



Simple Tips for Combatting Dry Feet

For some, dry feet can be a seasonal matter whenever the weather gets colder or dryer. For others, it's more of a full-time issue to deal with.

In either case, one matter remains the same: your body, for one reason or another, is not able to keep itself moisturized automatically. That means you need to take steps to address the problem yourself.

Dry feet are not only uncomfortable and unsightly, but they can lead to cracks and fissures within the skin as well. These can be particularly painful, and also open the way for infection.

Why do the feet have such a hard time keeping themselves from drying out? Because they have fewer oil glands and more sweat glands than just about anywhere else on our body. Oil helps keep moisture locked in, and there just isn't much to help our feet.

So, when dryness is affecting your feet, it's time to take matters into your own hands. Here are some easy steps to take:

- **Moisturize.** Simple as that. Applying a moisturizer to your feet daily will help combat dryness. Good ingredients include hyaluronic acid and glycerin, but you can determine what works best for your feet. The best time for moisturizing is just after a shower, when your feet are still a bit damp.
- **Make showers shorter and cooler.** Speaking of showers, the hotter the water and longer you stay in, the more likely it is to draw moisture away from your feet. Keep the temperature down and don't spend a half hour in there.
- **Keep your socks on.** A nice pair of cotton socks can help reduce friction against your feet, which can also strip away moisture.

If your feet remain dry and cracked no matter what you do, it's time to talk with us about it. We can help you find the right remedies to keep your skin smoother and healthier.

From the Doctor

Dr. Gregg Neibauer, DPM



Hope the new year is treating you well; hard to believe Spring is right around the corner. Hope you have enjoyed the mild Montana winter. Inside are some helpful tips for keeping your feet health and happy. Until next time.

– Dr. Neibauer

Get Social w/Us



Keeping Foot Fungus from Traveling Toe-to-Toe



A fungal infection on your feet can include athlete's foot or fungal toenails. It can even include them at the same time because—surprise!—they can be caused by the same type of fungi.

This means that a case of athlete's foot has the potential of infecting your toenails, and vice versa. You also want to make sure nobody else in your family or inner circle (like your gym pals) catches a fungal infection from you, either. Fungus like this is not the most contagious thing in the world, but it still has that chance—and who wants to have foot fungus traced back to them?

Here are some simple tips on keeping foot fungus from traveling around on your foot, and from your foot to another's.

- **Keep shower shoes on in public areas.** Fungi love damp, warm places with a lot of foot traffic. Showers, pools, and locker rooms fit that bill very nicely. One of the best ways to prevent the spread of fungus is to wear shower shoes in locations such as these.
- **Do not share towels.** You probably shouldn't be doing this anyway, but it can be especially troublesome if you have fungus! Be extra safe and have a color of towel only for you.
- **Keep your clippers private.** The toenail clippers you use should only be used by you and sanitized regularly. And do not use your toenail clippers on your fingernails. Yes, you can get a fungal infection there, too!
- **Avoid touching the fungus.** The less you are in contact with your own fungal infection, the less chance you have of spreading it. Try not to pick at it as much as possible, and if you do have to touch it, thoroughly wash your hands as soon as possible.

If you have further questions about treating or preventing the spread of foot fungus, please don't hesitate to talk with us about it!

Mark Your Calendars

- March 3** National Anthem Day: Oh say, can you see?
- March 9** National Napping Day: A quick rest can do wonders!
- March 28** National Something on a Stick Day:
Try to keep it healthier!
- April 1** International Fun at Work Day – No Joke!
- April 7** National Beer Day – Celebrating the repeal of
beer prohibition in 1933
- April 19** National Garlic Day – forget the romantic evening!



Squeezing the Benefits Out of Lemon Water

In a modern day of infusers and fruit water recipes that read like cocktails, humble lemon water might not shine as brightly. You squeeze some lemon into water. Done.

But for some of us, an easy and simple drink such as lemon water in the morning can have great benefits over time. Consider the following:

- **It increases your hydration.** Some of us don't hydrate enough, and the thought of water can be boring. If lemon water inspires more intake of water, you'll likely feel the day-to-day positives of that quickly.
- **It's conducive to weight loss.** Water—even with lemon—contains very few calories (6, if you squeeze half a lemon). Yes, we know that's not very surprising. But if you are replacing other higher-calorie drinks like juices and mochas with lemon water, the reduction in calories adds up over time.
- **It's a good source of vitamin C and potassium.** Half a lemon can give you 1/6 of your daily value of vitamin C, which helps your body better respond to cell damage and injury. It can also provide more potassium, which is necessary for blood pressure regulation and nerve health.
- **It can help prevent kidney stones.** Simply staying hydrated can help prevent painful kidney stones, but the citric acid intake is also a helpful factor.
- **It won't hurt your teeth.** Yes, acidic things can hurt tooth enamel. But the dilution of lemon in water is not a big deal. Now, if you're downing straight lemon juice, that's another matter...

The amount of lemon you use can vary based on taste. You can even go all out with one of those fancy infuser recipes, if you wish! The simple truth is anything that gets you drinking more water—and potentially some fruit-based nutrition—will be a positive for you.



Irish Soda Bread

Try this historic whole grain bread for a St. Patrick's Day-inspired treat.

Ingredients

- 2 ²/₃ c. white whole wheat flour (~12 ounces)
- ³/₄ c. wheat bran
- ¹/₂ c. plus 2 Tbsp. steel-cut oats
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- ³/₄ tsp. kosher salt
- ¹/₄ c. wheat germ
- 2 ¹/₄ c. low-fat buttermilk (room temperature)

Preparation

- Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F.
- Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups and level with a knife. Combine flour and all ingredients except the buttermilk in a large bowl. Stir well with a whisk.
- Slowly add buttermilk, stirring the mixture just until it's moist. Then let sit for 15 minutes.
- Spoon batter into a 9x5-inch metal loaf pan coated with cooking spray.
- Bake at 400 degrees for 40 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted into the center comes out clean.
- Cool in pan 5 minutes on a wire rack, then remove from pan. Continue cooling on the rack.



Alpine Foot & Ankle Clinic

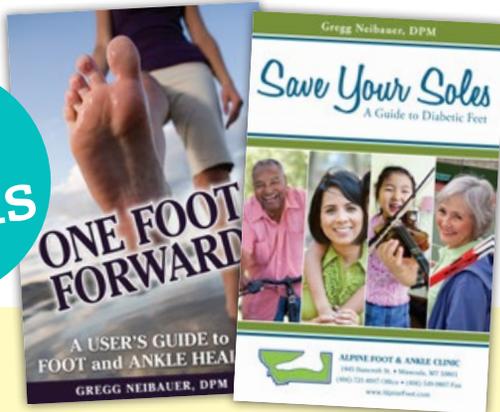
FOOT & ANKLE CARE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

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We want to thank you for referring patients to us. We are very glad that you trust us with your patients, family and friends. Making our patients feel comfortable at our office and healed is most important to our staff at Alpine Foot and Ankle Clinic! Thank you for partnering with us.

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Are Your Calf Muscles Causing You Heel Pain?

When anyone experiences consistent heel pain, there are a variety of possible causes. One you might not immediately consider is that your muscles are giving you too hard of a time.

The Achilles tendon—the largest tendon in our bodies—connects the heel bone to the calf muscles. Under normal circumstances, this is a perfectly comfortable setup that causes no problems whatsoever. If the calf muscles are tight, however, it can result in some strain in painful places.

Tight calf muscles can tug on the Achilles tendon—which already has enough forces to deal with regularly, thank you very much. This situation can also place excess strain on another connected tissue, the plantar fascia, which runs from the heel bone to the base of the toes.

Straining either the Achilles tendon or plantar fascia can cause heel pain, either via Achilles tendinitis or plantar fasciitis. It is also possible to develop heel spurs from these stresses.

You may have tight calf muscles simply due to genetic factors (i.e. they run in your family). However, it is also possible to develop tighter calf muscles over time as a result of long-term high heel use or a long-term lack of activity.

Fortunately, tight calf muscles can often be conditioned to place less stress on the heel bone and surrounding tissues. We might recommend a regimen of stretching and exercise that focuses on your calf muscles, as well as changes in footwear or the use of custom orthotics to place less stress on strained areas.

We would be happy to discuss your options for treating heel pain at any time. The sooner you start addressing the problem, the sooner you can find relief!