

Monthly Newsletter

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Accepting new patients

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Winter Foot Care

As the winter season unfolds, it brings with it a unique set of challenges for foot health. The colder temperatures, damp conditions, and tendency to wear restrictive footwear can contribute to various foot conditions.

Common Foot Conditions Experienced in Winter

• Dry and Cracked Skin

Winter air tends to be drier, which can lead to dry and cracked skin. This is often exacerbated by the use of indoor heating systems.

• Chilblains

Chilblains are painful, itchy swellings on the skin that occur in response to cold temperatures. They commonly affect the toes and fingers

• Frostbite

Exposure to extreme cold can lead to frostbite, a condition where the skin and underlying tissues freeze. The feet, being peripheral extremities, are particularly vulnerable.

• Athlete's Foot

Warm, damp winter boots can create an ideal environment for the growth of fungi, leading to conditions like athlete's foot

Foot Care Precautions During Winter

• Proper Moisturization

Combat dry and cracked skin by regularly moisturizing your feet. Choose a rich, hydrating foot cream and apply it after showering or before bed.



Winter Foot Care (Cont'd from previous page)

- Warm and Dry Footwear

Invest in waterproof and insulated winter footwear to keep your feet warm and dry. Change out of wet socks and shoes promptly to prevent fungal growth.

- Layering

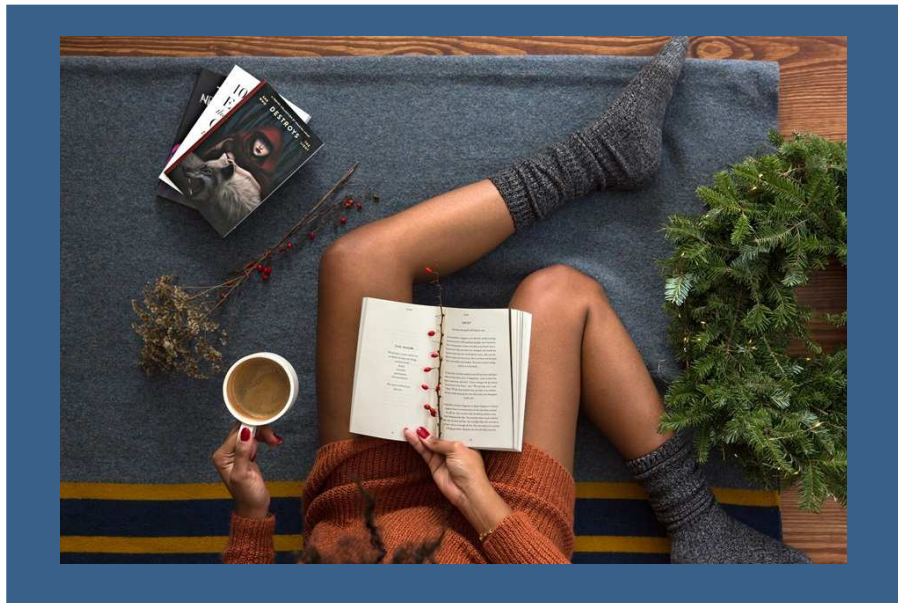
Wear moisture-wicking socks to keep your feet dry. Consider layering with thermal socks for added warmth during extremely cold temperatures.

- Regular Inspections

Check your feet regularly for any signs of dryness, cracking, or unusual changes. Early detection can prevent the progression of foot problems.

- Proper Hygiene

Maintain good foot hygiene by washing your feet daily, drying them thoroughly, and paying attention to the spaces between the toes.



How to Keep Feet Healthy in Winter

Firstly, maintain a regular exercise regime to promote blood circulation and help keep your feet warm.

If it snows regularly in your area, consider signing up for an indoor gym nearby, or buy a home exercise equipment such as an exercise bike or cross-trainer. Workouts such as squats and crunches may also be great options.

Next, treat your feet to occasional warm foot soaks with Epsom salts. This can help relax muscles, improve circulation, and soothe dry skin.

You should also trim your toenails straight across to prevent ingrown toenails. Proper nail care is essential to avoid infections and discomfort.

In conclusion, winter foot care is essential to ensure your feet remain healthy and comfortable despite the seasonal challenges.

If you experience persistent discomfort or notice concerning changes, make sure to visit your podiatrist soon for personalized care. ♦

Activities That Cause Foot Calluses

Calluses are thickened and hardened areas of skin that develop as a response to repeated friction, pressure, or irritation. On the feet, calluses often form in areas that endure prolonged stress, and while they are the body's way of protecting itself, they can become uncomfortable over time.

Activities That May Cause Foot Calluses

Barefoot Activities

Activities like running or walking barefoot, especially on rough surfaces, can expose the feet to friction and lead to calluses.

Intensive Sports

Participating in sports that involve repetitive motions, such as running or tennis, can contribute to callus development. The constant pressure on specific areas of your feet leads to calluses forming.

Manual Labor or Construction Work

Jobs that involve prolonged standing, heavy lifting, or the use of tools can lead to calluses on the feet.



These include movers, construction workers, tradespeople, and cashiers, especially if proper footwear is not worn.

Playing Musical Instruments

Musicians, especially those playing instruments that require foot involvement, may develop calluses due to prolonged pressure. These include drummers, foot percussionists, and tap dancers.

Dancing

Dancers would naturally develop calluses on the feet due to frequent twists and turns, especially while dancing barefoot. However, foot calluses in dancers provide essential protection for intensive moves and should

not be trimmed unless they cause other problems. Instead, they should be soaked in warm water and kept soft by applying petroleum jelly or skin cream daily.

Calluses may also form if you wear ill-fitting shoes, are obese, or neglect foot hygiene. Certain foot conditions like hammertoes and bunions may lead to calluses forming.

Ways to Minimise Risks of Calluses Forming

□ Proper Footwear: Choose well-fitting shoes with adequate support and cushioning to reduce friction and pressure on the feet.

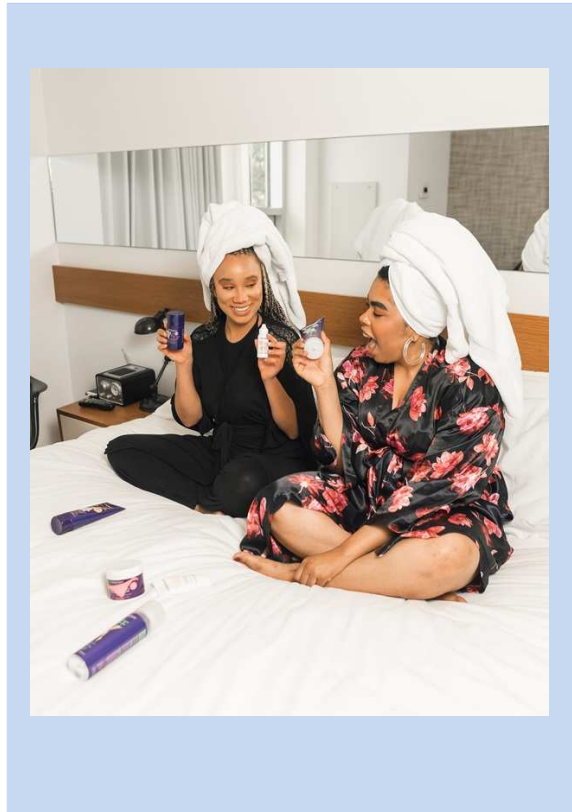
Activities That Cause Foot Calluses (Cont'd from previous page)

- ❑ **Foot Protection:** Wear appropriate footwear or foot protection when engaging in activities that pose a risk of friction or pressure.
- ❑ **Moisturize:** Regularly moisturize the feet to keep the skin soft and supple, reducing the likelihood of calluses forming.
- ❑ **Foot Pads:** Use foot pads or inserts to distribute pressure evenly and provide additional cushioning.
- ❑ **Regular Foot Checks:** Inspect your feet regularly for any signs of calluses or other skin issues, addressing them promptly.

How to Manage Foot Calluses

- **Soaking and Exfoliating:** Soak the feet in warm water, use a pumice stone to gently exfoliate, and moisturize the area to soften the callus.
- **Over-the-Counter Products:** Use over-the-counter callus cushions or pads to alleviate pressure and reduce discomfort.
- **Footwear Modifications:** Consider footwear modifications, such as wearing orthotic inserts, to reduce pressure on specific areas of the feet.
- **Avoiding Aggravating Activities:** Temporarily refrain from activities that may exacerbate a sore callus until it has healed.

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Conclusion

While many calluses can be managed at home, persistent discomfort should prompt a visit to your podiatrist, who can prescribe appropriate treatment and offer guidance on lifestyle changes. ♦

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