

# HAPPY, HEALTHY FEET

April 2013

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### Do Not Forget These Other Great Resources:

Healthwise® Handbook, the 24-Hour Nurse Line, Nurse Online Chat, Audio Health Information Library® and you can go online to [www.express-health.com](http://www.express-health.com) for links to reliable health information.

### Challenge:

Try our moves for massaging, strengthening and stretching three times a week to rejuvenate your feet.

[www.fitnessmagazine.com](http://www.fitnessmagazine.com)  
[www.plantar-fasciitis.org](http://www.plantar-fasciitis.org)  
[www.foot.com](http://www.foot.com)  
[www.everydayhealth.com](http://www.everydayhealth.com)  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

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Do not tip-toe around the condition of your feet, they are important and deserve the best. Foot pain can signal numerous health conditions, some of which could develop into something more serious. Pay attention to any foot pain and take discomforts seriously.

### SOME COMMON FOOT CONCERNS ARE:

- **Plantar Fasciitis:** Occurs when the plantar fascia ligament, which runs along the bottom of the foot, is excessively stretched and develops tears. The pain is usually felt near the inside of the foot where the heel and arch meet.
- **Heel Spur:** Is a pointy bone growth that stems from the heel bone and extends into the sensitive tissue and nerves causing pain with every step. These bone growths occur when the plantar fascia tendon is excessively and repeatedly pulled away from the heel bone.
- **Achilles Tendonitis:** Is similar to plantar fasciitis in that tears and inflammation occur in the Achilles tendon, which runs vertically from the heel to the ankle. Pain is usually felt behind the heel. Swelling or redness may develop over time.

The most common cause of pain and injury is over-pronation (flat-feet) or unusually high arch and improperly fitting footwear. Other causes include a sudden increase in physical activity, excessive weight on the foot due to obesity or pregnancy, arthritis, inadequate stretching before activity, direct injury and diabetes. People with diabetes are at higher risk for infection in their limbs and should take extra care at inspecting their feet for sores and redness. If you are experiencing discomfort or suspect injury, visit your doctor. Determining the cause of the pain is important for proper treatment. Common treatments include proper footwear and orthotics for extra support and cushion, which allow the condition to heal, stretching exercises for the feet and to warm up muscles, losing weight and elevating the heel with a heel cradle.

Our feet take quite a beating from day-to-day without much love in return.

### HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO CARE FOR STRESSED FEET:

- **Massage:** Grab a tennis ball. Sit or stand and place the ball under the arch of your foot, roll it along your arch, and shift to whatever part of your foot needs attention.
- **Strengthen:** Sitting on the ground, with legs outstretched in front of you. Start with one foot pointed and trace the alphabet in the air. Work through upper and lower case letters in cursive. Then, repeat on the other foot.
- **Stretch:** Lie on your back with your right foot on the floor. Bend your left leg, keeping hands behind knee. Flex your left foot, slowly pointing it, reaching through your toes, then curl toes into a "fist." Flex your ankle, then slowly uncurl toes. Repeat 5 times; switch sides.