

FOOT NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR SPRINGFIELD PODIATRY AND ACCURATE FOOT & DIABETIC CARE

July, 2021 Edition

Summertime is Here!

We are back in the full swing of summertime! These hot, humid days are perfect for outdoor fun, including swimming, fishing, boating, camping, strolling along shady trails or whatever else interests you.

In our last newsletter, we discussed several ways to keep your feet safe poolside or at the beach, and we reviewed how to care for your sunburn. Another common foot problem all year round that occurs more often in the hot, humid summer months is athlete's foot. This is actually a fungal infection in the skin.

Athlete's foot, or tinea pedis, can take several forms. Commonly, it occurs between the toes where moisture gets trapped and cannot evaporate or be wicked away by socks. In this case, you may see macerated (moist, white) skin, scaling and redness. More worrisome is when the skin cracks between the toes. This can lead to a bacterial infection in the skin and deeper tissues called cellulitis, causing redness, swelling, warmth and pain extending into the foot. Cellulitis must be treated with an oral antibiotic.

When athlete's foot occurs on the bottom of the foot, we see scaling, generally in a circular pattern, and redness. There also may be tiny blisters or pustules.

On the top of the foot, we may see a red, raised irregular (serpiginous) line with some scaling. Small blisters or pustules may be present here as well.

To treat athlete's foot, we want to follow a basic rule of dermatology: if it is wet, dry it; if it is dry, wet it.

So, if you have excess moisture between the toes, soak your foot in a drying agent such as Domeboro soaks or even Epsom salt and water. Use one tablespoon of Epsom salt per pint of warm (not hot) water and soak for 10-15 mins once or twice daily. Pat the feet dry and use a thin washcloth to dry thoroughly between the toes. You can use an OTC antifungal cream between the toes once or twice daily. The labels often tell you to use this medication for one week, but I recommend four weeks to be certain the fungus is clear. If you have difficulty reaching between the toes, use a cotton tip swab.

Once the cream dries, use powder in the socks or a spray powder between the toes. If your toes are very close together, as is often the case for the two smallest toes, use some cotton between them that you change daily and remove at night.

For the dry, scaling athlete's foot on the bottom or top of the feet, use an OTC antifungal cream once or twice daily for 4 weeks. Soaking is generally not necessary in this case and may cause cracking of the skin.

If your feet perspire in shoes, wear shoes with a breathable upper material such as mesh or real leather. Because this is not always possible, apply powder (baby powder, Gold Bond, etc.) in your socks each day. At the end of the day, remove your shoes or workboots, wash the feet and let them air in supportive sandals.

Another important consideration regarding shoes or boots is that fungus and bacteria can travel from the feet, through socks and into the shoes. When you wear the shoes again, the fungus and bacteria then travel from the shoe, through the socks and back to your feet. This is often the cause of recurring athlete's foot. A shoe disinfectant spray or even Lysol disinfectant spray can help to improve the environment in which your feet spend much of the day. To use these, remove the innersole if possible and spray liberally in the shoe and on the innersole. Allow these to completely dry before wearing the shoe or boot. Consider spraying your shoes or boot about every two weeks or less often if you do not wear that pair regularly.

For severe cases of athlete's foot or those that do not respond to the over-the-counter creams or sprays, call the office to schedule an evaluation. It may not be a fungal infection, or you may have a bacterial infection on top of the fungal infection. You may also require a prescription antifungal medication. In rare cases, a topical steroid cream combined with a topical antifungal cream is necessary, or you may require an oral antifungal medication in particularly difficult cases.

To recap, be sure to carefully wash and thoroughly dry your feet daily, including between the toes. Change your shoes frequently and spray them with a disinfectant spray. Air your feet regularly and consider spray powders to reduce the risk of developing athlete's foot.

PERSONALLY SPEAKING:

July marks the one-year anniversary of Dr. Rostami joining our practice! A native Miamian, he completed his education and surgical training in Miami before moving to Pennsylvania to be closer to his future fiancé. Dr. Rostami enjoys cooking a variety of cuisines and trying new recipes. His favorite sport is soccer, and he is a fan favorite of Portugal, although his favorite club is Real Madrid of Spain.

During his free time, Dr. Rostami likes to read personal growth books and is currently reading Ray Dalio's *Principles*. A self-proclaimed movie nerd, Dr. Rostami's favorite genre is suspense and thriller movies. Contrary to this, his all-time favorite movie is the *Lord of the Rings Trilogy*.

Fun facts, Dr. R. is bilingual in English and Farsi. He can also whistle with any one of his fingers!

MYTH BUSTERS:

Tight shoes cause bunions. This is a common misconception. Bunions are caused by faulty mechanics of the feet due to your inherited foot structure. A lack of support or improper shoes can speed the formation of bunions and make them more painful, but shoes do not actually cause bunions to occur.

WHAT'S NEW?

Looking for an interesting book? Dr. Siegeman has written a book called, "*Laser Away Foot Pain*". This book is an easy read that discusses the many conditions that can be successfully treated with Class 4 laser therapy in both our offices. The treatments take only a few minutes and are pain-free. We have achieved great success in resolving numerous acute and chronic conditions, often preventing the

need for surgery. For your free copy of “*Laser Away Foot Pain*”, you may request a copy in the office or go to www.drSiegerman.com/laserbook to have the book mailed to you.

QUOTES OF THE MONTH:

“Freedom is nothing but a chance to be better.” - Albert Camus

“We didn’t realize we were making memories, we just knew we were having fun.”
- Winnie the Pooh (A. A. Milne)

FUN FACTS:

Your feet have about 250,000 sweat glands and can produce up to a half pint of sweat per day.

PUZZLE:

Call today for your foot health evaluation!

In Drexel Hill, call 484-459-5954

(springfieldpodiatry@springpod.comcastbiz.net)

In West Chester, call 610-436-5883

(accpodiatry@gmail.com)

Or visit us at www.drsiegerman.com

Dr. Julie Siegerman and Dr. Siavash Rostami