



June 2018 News and Updates



Watch for These Athlete's Foot Risks

Meet the Team



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Hotter weather and vacation time might equal a lot more time barefoot for some of us. Exposed feet in public activities, however, can often increase the risk of picking up a case of athlete's foot.

Athlete's foot is not just a summertime condition, however. This fungal infection can happen anytime of the year; all you need is the right conditions for exposure.

Here are some risk factors to keep in mind when trying to avoid this itchy, burning infection:

- **Warm, damp public places.** The athlete's foot fungus thrives in these conditions, so attention should be paid in public locker rooms, showers, and pools. Wear shower shoes when possible, and wash off your feet using the facilities provided.
- **Having damp feet.** You don't need a pool to have wetness against your feet. Feet that are sweaty for long periods of time and stuffed into warm, humid shoes are also at higher risk. Give your feet and shoes time to dry, switching socks throughout the day, if necessary.
- **Sharing footwear with someone already infected.** Even if someone has recovered, the fungus may still exist in shoes and socks. Make sure to treat all infected footwear with anti-fungal products. And really, in general, never wear someone else's shoes.
- **Minor skin or nail injuries.** Having even just a small cut or injury can increase the chances of the fungus finding access. Use bandages for added protection.

If you or someone in your family has already picked up a case of athlete's foot, we can help you determine not only the best treatment, but ways to keep the fungus from transferring to others. Just ask!

Facts to Know About Blood Pressure



That tightening cuff. The stethoscope against your arm. And then a couple of numbers.

Blood pressure is a part of many general physical examinations, but doesn't tend to be thought about unless the doctor notes a problem with it.

So what is a blood pressure reading measuring, anyway? Those two numbers represent pressure at two points of your heartbeat:

- **Systolic Pressure**, the top number, is the pressure of your heart contracting.
- **Diastolic Pressure**, the bottom number, is the pressure when your heart relaxes.

If you think of your heartbeat as a "lub-dub," systolic is the "lub" and diastolic is the "dub."

Now, a blood pressure reading is not always an exact science. The position you are in when your reading is taken can have an influence on the results. Your blood pressure can even vary by arm, which is why your doctor will sometimes check both.

High blood pressure tends to be a concern whenever it is found. Diet can cause this, of course. But while high sodium intake is often touted as a risk factor, too little salt can also cause blood pressure to rise in some people!

If you want to know a mineral that's great for regulating blood pressure, go with potassium. It helps relax the walls of your arteries and keep your pressure in a healthy range.



Employee Spotlight

Dear Karin,

It is with a prideful heart that we say good bye and wish you all the best you deserve in your real estate venture.

You joined the Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists family over 5 years ago as a physician extender. You interviewed with an excitement and energy that proved unwavering. You have an insatiable thirst for knowledge and the rare ability to learn something one time, customize that skill per the situation and improve upon that skill with each use. Your presence is uplifting, positive, friendly, dedicated and loyal. You made improvements and protocols for our office that are permanent. Your skills are the standard that we use to hire and train all our physician extender candidates.

Your tenacious attitude was an essential part of our success. We are honored that you made Austin Foot and Ankle Specialists your home for the last five years. Your support, suggestions and loyalty are unmatched. Your daily presence is missed.



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Is Nail Polish Toxic?

The potential health risks of nail polish have been a source of debate for some time. You might still see some of it rise up on your Facebook timeline or news articles.

But what should you be looking for when considering nail polish ingredients?

In the past, three big chemicals were tagged for removal from most polishes: dibutyl phthalate, toluene, and formaldehyde. This “toxic trio” was flagged for potential health risks presented to both nail salon workers and users.

There is another chemical that has also been under scrutiny in recent years: triphenyl phosphate (TPHP). This chemical can be absorbed into the body via nail polish, and has been found in nearly half of nail polish brands as of 2015.

TPHP has been seen to cause hormone disruption in animals. However, there have not been any large findings that the chemical has effects on humans.

What does that mean for you, though? You might not necessarily have to toss every bottle of polish you own. If you do have concerns about potential toxins, however, look for brands that advertise being “3-free” (free from the original “toxic trio”) at the base. But there are also brands that are “5-free,” “7-free” or more.

If you have additional questions about best nail polish practices, or if you have any additional concerns about your toenails, don't be afraid to bring them up to us. We'll gladly help you keep your nails—and you—healthy.



Kick Up Your Water with an Infusion Recipe

We get that water isn't always the most exciting beverage, but infusion is a great way to add a kick of flavor with less sugar than sodas and juices.

Try this easy infused water recipe for a taste of what flavored water can do, then feel free to try your own ideas! A pitcher with an infusing lid is a good investment for this, but a half-gallon mason jar will work too.

Strawberry Lemon Infused Water

Ingredients

- 15 fresh strawberries
- 1 lemon
- Water

Preparation

- Wash and finely slice the strawberries, then add them to a ½ gallon infusion pitcher or glass jar
- Wash and slice the lemon, rind on, and add to the container
- Stir gently and refrigerate at least 4 hours

That's all there is to it! And if you drink down much of the water in the first day, simply refill the container to get a second infusion out of the fruit.



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What Morning Heel Pain Can Mean



You wake up in the morning, wanting to seize the day, but those first steps out of bed are something you're definitely not looking forward to.

Do you have heel pain when your heels first hit the ground in the morning. And does it tend to lessen after you spend a few minutes walking around and "limbering up"? It's a good sign that you might have a condition known as plantar fasciitis.

The plantar fascia is a thick band that runs beneath your foot, connecting the base of your toes to your heel. Excessive stress on this band can cause it to develop tiny tears and grow inflamed.

This damage often translates to pain after any long period of inactivity, such as getting out of the bed in the morning or sitting for a lengthy amount of time. This pain is usually centered on the bottom of your heel, and can take the form of an aching, stabbing, or burning sensation.

If morning heel pain like this has plagued you for some time, don't accept it as a "normal part of life." Plantar fasciitis is a significant but treatable conditions. Methods including custom orthotics, stretches, and icing can help. There is very rarely ever a need for surgery.

Bring up your heel pain concerns with us. We'll work with you to determine the best treatment plan for your lifestyle and needs!