

How to Avoid Sunburn [Yes, on Your Feet!]

Getting dealt a nasty sunburn during the summer is often something we fear for our faces, necks, and backs, but we don't tend to think of our feet all that much.

You might have seen this coming, but we really should!

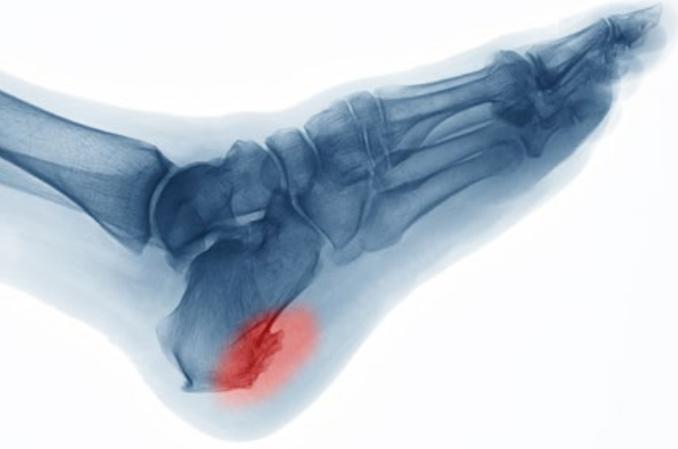
Our feet spend so much time in shoes that we don't often think of them being exposed in the summer sun. It's not until we get that pain and redness that we realize we should have been more diligent. Also, unfortunately, the skin of our feet is as susceptible to radiation-influenced skin problems and diseases as other parts of our skin—and that does include cancer.

Thankfully, it's as easy to protect your feet from sunburn as it is the rest of you, too!

- **Use Sunscreen** – Easy, right? But we also know how people tend to apply this stuff. Don't wait until you get out of the car at your destination; apply sunscreen 30 minutes before you go out into the sun for best effects! Remember to re-apply every 2-4 hours too, and use an SPF of at least 15.
- **Wear Shoes if Needed** – A pair of pool shoes could help you avoid burns if you're particularly vulnerable. Flip-flops, of course, will only give you some nice pinstriping.
- **Be Extra Careful if Already Burned** – Sunburned skin is often more sensitive and more likely to burn again until it fully heals. Depending on the severity of the burn, this could be up to 6 months away!

If you have burned feet in need of treatment, or you simply want advice on preventing it from happening again, don't be afraid to ask!





Is My Foot Pain from a Heel Spur?

A heel spur is an odd little condition. If you have heel pain, a spur might be your first idea of its cause. It is an insidious little bony growth on the underside of your heel bone, right?

Well, it can be. But here's the kicker: about half of people who have a heel spur don't feel any pain from it! You might have a heel spur and never even know it—and that's perfectly fine. No harm, no need to treat it.

But if you do have heel pain, what might make it more likely to be a heel spur than another cause, such as plantar fasciitis?

The following factors may increase your risk for heel spurs:

- Gait abnormalities that place excessive force on the heel
- Being an avid runner or jogger, especially on pavement
- Being overweight or obese
- Having a job where you spend most of the day standing

The pain of a heel spur isn't the spur itself, but rather it poking into and irritating the soft tissues around it. The pain has been described as that of a pin or knife against the bottom of the foot, usually when first standing up in the morning or after a long period of time resting. This pain usually transitions into a dull ache.

However, plantar fasciitis is also described this way in some cases, so the best route for addressing any type of heel pain is to have it checked out professionally. Whether it's a heel spur or another condition, we can determine the best course of treatment that fits your lifestyle and needs.

Mark Your Calendars

- August 2** National Coloring Book Day – Stay within the lines!
- August 5** National Friendship Day – Thank you for being a friend
- August 8** National Sneak Some Zucchini Onto Your Neighbor's Porch Day – The fruitcake of produce
- August 11** National Garage Sale Day – Clean out your house!
- August 15** National Relaxation Day – Take some time for tranquility
- August 17** National I Love My Feet Day – You likely do if you see us!
- August 25** National Banana Split Day – The banana makes it healthy...right?
- August 31** National Matchmaker Day – Who would you set up on a date?



Do We Really Need Self Care?

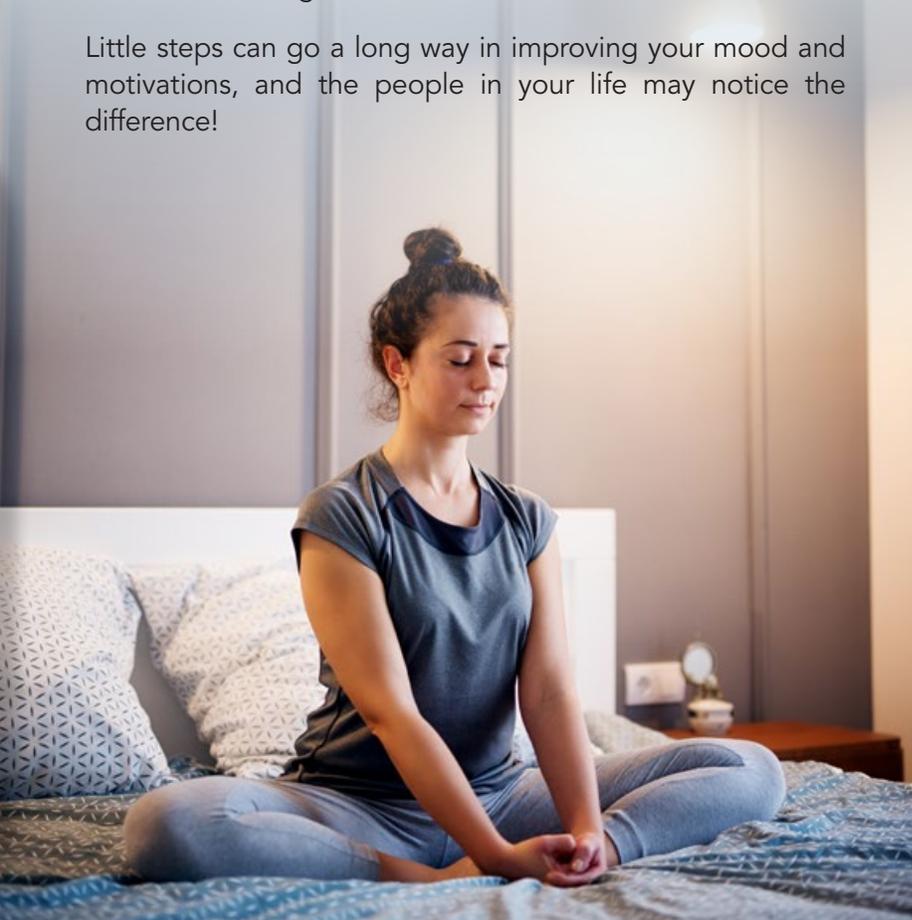
There is a lot said about self-care nowadays, but the tone of this discussion seems to variate between serious and mocking. Is there really some importance to it, or is it a fad?

It's safe to say that, in most cases, our lives are filled with demands from others. These are demands out of love, devotion, duty, work—and while they're often noble, they can take a toll on our well-being if they are continuous. Not only can this affect us, but also our performance and ability to do for others.

In this sense, self-care shouldn't be considered a selfish action (although some could certainly use it as an excuse to do so). Proper self-care is more like the airplane safety advice to put an oxygen mask on yourself before helping others with theirs. If you don't take some time for yourself, your time helping others will start to deteriorate!

You don't have to take a week off or expensive spa trips to self-care. Spend a few minutes each day doing some meditative breathing. Take a short walk outside. Carve a bit of time to do something you love that you haven't been able to for a while. Take time to actually savor what you're eating instead of scarfing it down!

Little steps can go a long way in improving your mood and motivations, and the people in your life may notice the difference!



Greek Yogurt Chocolate Fudge Pops

Chocolatey goodness doesn't have to be too terrible for you. Give this take on a refreshing summer treat a try!

Ingredients

- 1 c. fat-free Greek yogurt, plain
- 6 Tbsp cocoa powder, unsweetened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ c. low-fat milk
- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp agave nectar
- You will also need some popsicle molds, about $\frac{1}{3}$ c. each in size

Preparation

- Throw all ingredients into a blender and puree. Make sure to stop at least once during the process to scrape ingredients off the side of the container and get them back into the mix.
- Divide the mixture among six molds and freeze until solid.

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How to Prevent Foot Cramps

Nothing will plunge you into the pit of existential terror quite as abruptly as a sudden foot cramp. You're just walking along, or you do a little stretch in bed, and suddenly you're frozen in pain!

If this has ever happened to you, you're not alone. It's believed around 60 percent of adults have suffered a leg or foot cramp at least once—and usually at nighttime. They tend to be harmless in the end, but getting to that end can be an ordeal!

Foot cramps can happen for a variety of reasons, which means there are a variety of ways to prevent them. You might have to figure out which is the right way for your particular situation.

- **Hydrate Better** – Although dehydration is not thought of as a leading cause of cramps anymore, it can still be a contributor to exercise issues that can be. It does not hurt to stay properly hydrated.
- **Stretch Before Exercising** – Stretching your calves and feet before exercise can help prevent a seize-up during activity.
- **Consume More Nutrients** – A deficiency in minerals such as potassium, calcium, or magnesium has been known to contribute to leg and foot cramps. Increasing your intake via supplements may help. Even better, eat foods rich in these minerals such as leafy greens, nuts, beans, bananas, and avocados.

There are additional causes of cramps, such as side-effects of medications or potential conditions. These causes are best determined by a medical professional. If you have had cramps for a while and have found no relief, it's high time to consult with us and get to the bottom of things.

