

NORTH AUSTIN

FOOT & ANKLE

I N S T I T U T E

July 2019
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Protect Your Feet from Summer Sun

Whether you're on vacation in the Bahamas (we wish) or just spending plenty of time out in the local sun, it's been long-stressed to us to wear sunscreen to protect from a painful and damaging sunburn. But do our feet need it too?

Feet tend to be passed over for sunscreen treatment compared to many other locations, maybe because we wear shoes so often we don't think about them being exposed. But if your bare feet will be out in the sun, they need protection just as much as any other area!

How should you apply sunscreen for time out at the pool or beach? Pretty much like you would apply it anywhere else on your body! Make sure to get both the tops and bottoms of your feet. However, don't go between the toes. It's too easy for moisture to accumulate and get trapped there, making that area more susceptible to fungal infections and other unpleasanties.

A big tip for applying sunscreen anywhere on your body deals with timing. Many people will wait until just before they hit the sun to apply sunscreen, perhaps thinking that doing so beforehand lessens the amount of time the substance will be effective. But that's not the case! Sunscreen takes about 30 minutes to fully bind to the skin, so slather it on earlier so it's in high gear before your sun exposure.

And if the strength of your sunscreen runs out before you're done, well, just apply more, right? Make sure to read the directions for each brand of sunscreen you use, as each will have different recommendations!

Want more advice for summer protection for your feet? We'll be happy to help!



What the Color of Your Toenails Might be Trying to Tell You



Some toenails are a canvas for painting all sorts of colors, but what about the color of your nails when the polish and other decorations come off?

If your toenails are no longer the clearish hue they once were, it might be a sign of something afoot. In some cases, it might simply be the case of polish staining the nails over time, but other conditions can manifest a change in toenail color as well.

Your best option if you notice a change in your toenail color is to let us know. There are many reasons why toenails might change color, and we have the tools and expertise to help you determine what exactly is going on.

In general, however, here are a few possibilities:

- **A fungal toenail infection** will almost always result in a change in nail color, as well as thickening, brittleness and other unsightly symptoms. Common colors you may see from a fungal infection are yellowish, red-brown, green, or black.
- **Certain medical conditions** can also cause color changes. These may include diabetes, circulation issues, or heart and lung conditions. We may ask about your medical history if we are examining your nails for these reasons.
- **Trauma to the nail** can also cause discoloration that may last for longer than you expect. This can include black toenails in runners, which often causes the nail to fall off.

If your toenails are not the right shade, you should definitely bring it to our attention. We may have recommendations and treatments for you to regain natural clarity—and perhaps address an underlying condition as well.

Mark Your Calendars

- July 3** National Eat Your Beans Day – Celebrate a foundation in many global diets!
- July 7** National Father Daughter Take a Walk Day – Get some exercise and bonding time.
- July 12** National Simplicity Day – Celebrated on the birthday of Henry David Thoreau.
- July 15** National Give Something Away Day – What would spark joy for another?
- July 20** National Moon Day – It's the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing!
- July 24** National Drive-Thru Day – But don't make it a habit.
- July 27** National Day of the Cowboy – Yeehaw!
- July 29** National Chicken Wing Day – How spicy do you like yours?





Think You Can't Exercise? Try These Routines!

There are plenty of reasons why one's ability to perform many exercises is inhibited. You could have pain from arthritis, nerve pain that makes certain movements unbearable, or other complications where going on a run or hitting the gym normally just isn't in the cards.

That does not mean all your options are necessarily off the table, though!

Worthwhile exercise plans can be developed for many conditions, and do not always have to include high-impact activities. The best course of action is always to consult with your physician to determine the best methods for your needs, but some of these options may have potential.

- **Walking.** Do not underestimate the benefits of walking. It is a great activity for building strength, balance, and endurance without placing excessive stress on your body. Yes, mall walkers have the right notion!
- **Arm exercises.** If moving your legs and feet can be problematic, arm exercises with free weights can still be well worth it. More aerobic exercises can also be performed with arms only using hand cycles or pedal exercisers.
- **Water aerobics.** Water is a great way to provide resistance without stress on joints. Swimming and standing water aerobics can be good low-impact exercises.

Exercise is not always about having a high heart rate. If you are keeping yourself moving, building your core, and increasing your strength, those are great benefits you can carry into the future.



Red, White, and Blue Mocktail

Want a simple way to make a stunning patriotic display for summer picnics? Try a red, white, and blue mocktail! It provides a refreshing drink to sip on a hot day and looks amazing in the process.

Ingredients

- ¼ c. fresh raspberries or strawberries (your choice of red!)
- ¾ tsp. grenadine
- 2 Tbsp. club soda
- crushed ice
- lemon-lime soda
- fresh blueberries

Preparation

- This is a drink you build from the ground up.
- Place your red fruit in the bottom of a tall glass, then drizzle with grenadine.
- Add the club soda.
- Fill the glass the rest of the way with crushed ice (your white).
- Very slowly pour in the lemon-lime soda. Doing so too quickly will mix things up a bit too much and mar the aesthetic.
- Top with blueberries.



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Fight Back Against Gout Flares

Summertime can be filled with barbecues, picnics, parties, and hosts of other opportunities to eat without abandon. If you have gout, however, your choices can affect your chances of waking up with a painful gout flare.

A big element in all of this is purines, a substance found in many foods that breaks down into uric acid within the body. This is the acid that can accumulate and crystallize around a joint, leading to that terrible pain.

So, a good gout-fighting strategy is to limit your purines, and you can do so while still having a good time!

When it comes to purine avoidance, you want to limit or eliminate foods such as:

- Red meats.
- Certain types of seafood, such as tuna, sardines, trout, herring, and haddock.
- High-fat foods, including rich desserts, creams, and full-fat dairy.
- Sweetened drinks, alcohol and, of course, sweetened alcohol.

In many cases, you don't have to cut these items out of your life entirely (although if your physician recommends you do, follow their advice!). Be frugal with your intake, however, and set good limits—such as just one drink at an event.

Also, do not try to fast before a big event thinking you can “bank” your purine intake. We're afraid it doesn't usually work that way.

If you have other questions about gout management, we are more than happy to help. Just let us know!