

FOOT CARE

By Dr. Benjamin Kauth, Director
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There's nothing like aching feet to take the joy out of your vacation. Summer will be miserable if you have to trudge along sizzling pavements or hard roads on hot and painful feet. They'll ruin your posture, sap your vitality, and even put a sour expression on your face.

Everybody finds summer rough on the feet, mostly because we spend a great deal of time out of doors walking, running and participating in our favorite sports. Whether you're a tennis fiend, play 18 holes of golf, disappear week-ends on camping trips, or merely like to gambol on the beach, your feet will take a beating unless you pay attention to foot care and proper shoes.

The first step toward summer foot health is well-fitting footwear made of proper materials, to assure vacation days that are trouble-free underfoot.

Podiatrists and other medical specialists prefer all-leather shoes, which "air condition" the feet. Leather, being an animal hide and the closest thing to the human skin, retains its breathing pores and, therefore, permits a continuous change of air inside the shoe. This allows moisture to evaporate readily. Also, leather's suppleness and flexibility provide foot-cradling support to your feet, which is especially important when the thermometer runs up records.

When you buy shoes in the summertime, remember that they're more important to your comfort and health than anything else you wear. An ill-fitting bathing suit or blouse won't do you any physical harm, but the wrong choice of shoe can touch off a lot of misery later. So spend as much time as you need in the shoe store, and leave only when you've selected a pair that feel as comfortable as you would want them to be in a couple of months time.

Don't let the shoe salesman talk you into shoes that need "breaking in." If you wear painfully tight shoes, something is going to give, and the chances are it'll be your feet—and your temper. So buy shoes that are roomy up front with plenty of space for the toes, but be sure that the heel counter fits snugly to avoid any up-and-down rubbing that chafes the skin.



A regular routine of foot exercises will put pep into your step this summer.

A major reason why so many vacationists complain of being footsore is that they wear soft-soled playshoes too many hours a day. The rubber and starch-laden canvas of a pair of sneakers, for instance, encourages moisture to collect on the feet and prevents it from evaporating. Also, playshoes weaken the bones and muscles of the feet if worn indiscriminately, since they offer no support to the arch and instep. When you've finished that game of tennis, kick off your sneakers, powder your feet, change your socks, and put on your regular leather shoes.

Once your feet are equipped with a well-chosen pair of shoes, they'll benefit further from a little daily care. Remember, your feet work as hard as your heart, and take more punishment than your hands, jaws, or nearly any other part of your body. Even the best behaved feet will rebel at times, and neglect of aches and pains, however short-lived, may lead to definite trouble.

The best way to avoid joining those legions whose feet bear the scars of summertime abuse is to follow these simple rules:

1. Wash your feet daily, especially between the toes. If they're really tired, throw a handful of