

Don't get cold feet

Chilly weather can be hard on feet. Here are some tips for healthy feet in the winter.



- 1. If the shoe fits, wear it:** Narrow shoes, overly-high heels or shoes that aren't worn very often, such as dress shoes, can irritate feet and lead to blisters, calluses, swelling, and even severe ankle injuries. Choose a shoe that has a low heel and fits your foot in length, width, and depth while standing.
- 2. Don't overindulge:** Shellfish, red meat, red wine, and beer can trigger extremely painful gout attacks, a condition when uric acid builds up and crystallizes in and around your joints. Uric acid is sensitive to temperature changes (so gout can start in the big toe, which is the coldest part of the body).
- 3. Be pedicure-safety conscious:** Nail salons can be a breeding ground for bacteria. To reduce your risk of infection, choose a winter-getaway salon that follows proper sanitation practices and is licensed by the state. Consider also purchasing your own pedicure instruments to bring to your appointment.
- 4. Watch for ice and snow:** Use caution when traveling outdoors. Watch for ice or snow patches along your trail. The ankle joint can be more prone to serious injury from falling on ice. If you fall, use R.I.C.E. therapy (Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation) to help reduce the pain and control swelling around the injury until you see a doctor.
- 5. "Listen" to your feet:** Inspect your feet regularly for any sign of ingrown toenails, bruising, swelling, blisters, dry skin, or calluses, especially if you have diabetes.