

MODE

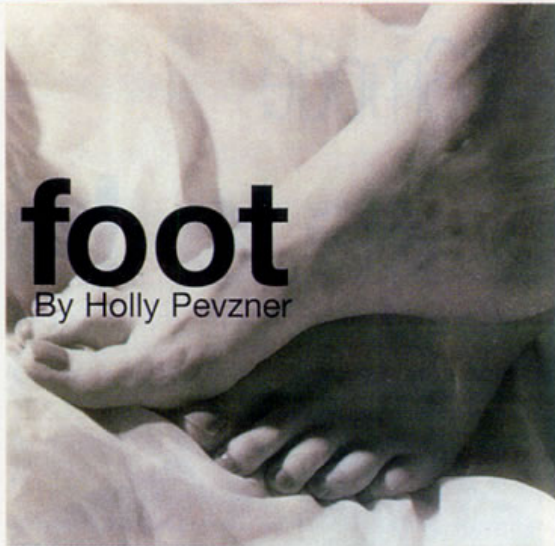
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HEALTHmode

on the right foot

By Holly Pevzner

Summer breezes, strappy sandals, pastel-painted toes—and blisters, bunions, and calluses? Season after sweaty season we squeeze our feet into the wispiest of shoes and then pay the price—for fashion's sake. Here, experts' tips on treating feet in the summer heat.



FIT FEET

GET FRESH KNOCK YOUR SOCKS OFF
Try this lemongrass deodorizing foot spray to relieve and refresh.



ORIGINS FOOT SCRUBBER
A cool tool to take the edges off.



PHILOSOPHY SOUL OWNER
Get super-smooth feet with the help of glycolic acid.



THE GREENHOUSE SOLE SOOTHER
An antiseptic healer loved by spa-goers.



THE STRAP ATTACK

One of the biggest podiatric predators is the thin shoe strap—as you move, straps become pressure points, causing nasty blisters underneath. “Look for shoes with broad, flat straps—a half-inch or larger—rather than little thin ones,” says Noreen Oswell, DPM, a Los Angeles-based podiatrist and president of the California Podiatric Medical Association.

Sweet Feet Slap on moleskin (you can find it in any drugstore) beneath straps to prevent a sore from forming. If the blister appears regardless, apply an antibacterial ointment, like Neosporin. “Foot blisters get infected easily,” says Dr. Oswell. “If it’s red and sore, see a podiatrist.”

THE CRUEL MULE

Backless sandals (with the pointy toes and the kitten heels) are to die for, and killer on your feet, too. “Your toes have to work overtime, gripping to keep the shoes on,” explains Dr. Oswell. This causes painful cramps in both the arch of the foot and the toes. Plus, if you lose your grip, down you go—possibly breaking a bone. In addition, backless shoes lead to super-dry feet.

Sweet Feet To ease arch and toe pain, elevate and ice. If possible, get a foot massage. Or roll those babies over a tennis ball to relieve the pain. And those backless shoes require moisturized soles. Slather a thick cream like Curel Skin Healing Stick all over your feet right after you get out of the shower to prevent cracking and infection. If you get that cracking anyway, see the doctor—you’re going to need antibiotics.

THE NAKED TRUTH

We all love the feel of sand under our toes, but bare feet aren’t always the smartest (or the safest) summer alternative. Shoes shield us from splinters, burns, fungus, and even pain.

Sweet Feet “Many people with foot problems go shoeless in the summer,” says Dr. Oswell, “but they’re far better off in something supportive.” If your problems are on the surface—calluses or blisters—bare is okay. But according to Dr. Oswell, “If you have arch or heel pain, opt for sneakers.” And remember, whether you’re splashing in algae-infested waters or sauntering around the Jacuzzi—the fungus is among us. Don some rubbery thongs (aka flip-flops). “They’re great for around the pool and minimal walking,” says Dr. Oswell.

THE HEEL DEAL

Once you go high, you can pretty much wave bye-bye to healthy, pain-free feet. “High heels push your feet into an unnatural position,” says Los Angeles-based Randi Ginsberg, DPM. “Excess pressure on the heel and ball of your foot can cause everything from strains and sprains to spurs.”

Sweet Feet If you simply must wear those sexy heels, don’t go higher than two inches. “Also, the chunkier the base, the more stability you have,” says Dr. Oswell. “A thick heel disperses pressure on the ball of the foot, which means it’ll prevent ankle-twisting and calluses.”

HERE’S THE POINT

If you’re partial to pointy toes, you’re cruisin’ for more than a bruise. “Pointed shoes can cause cramping, corns, calluses, even hammer toes,” says Dr. Ginsberg.