

COMMON FOOT FACTS AND MYTHS

Early Awareness Prevents Long Term Complications

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1 Barefoot Walking

Walking barefoot is always harmful and should be completely avoided because it can not lead to injuries, infections, or other foot problems.

Walking barefoot is not always harmful. On safe surfaces, it can actually strengthen foot muscles, improve balance, and help the feet develop naturally. Problems only occur on dirty, sharp or unsafe surfaces, so caution is important. (1)



2 Bunions

If a bunion is not painful, it is only a cosmetic problem and does not affect how the foot works. Many people think that without pain, it is harmless and does not need attention. They believe it only changes the appearance of the big toe.

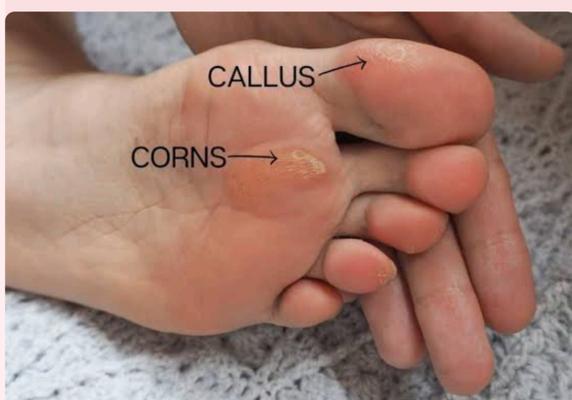
Even without pain, a bunion can change foot biomechanics by shifting weight distribution across the forefoot. This may increase pressure on other toes and lead to future complications. (2)



3 Blisters

Blisters on the feet must always be popped or drained immediately in order to heal faster, and leaving them alone will only make them worse or slow down the healing process.

Blisters should not be popped because the fluid inside protects the skin underneath and helps it heal. Popping a blister can cause infection, increase pain, and slow healing. It is better to keep it clean, covered, and let it heal naturally. (3)



4 Corns And Calluses

Corns and calluses must always be cut or scraped off at home to get rid of them, or they will keep spreading and cause serious harm.

Corns and calluses are the skin way to protect itself from friction or pressure. They usually do not need cutting and can be treated safely with padding, moisturizing, or proper footwear. (4)



5 Toenail Cutting

Cutting your toenails in a rounded shape instead of straight across will prevent problems like ingrown toenails or discomfort.

Cutting toenails straight across, rather than rounding the edges, actually helps prevent ingrown toenails. Rounding the corners can make the nail grow into the skin, causing pain or infection. (5)



6 Flat Feet

Flat feet always cause pain and problems. Many think children need special shoes for them. Some believe adults should avoid exercise to prevent injury.

Most people with flat feet have no pain or problems. Special shoes or treatment are only needed if there is discomfort. Many flat footed people can exercise and stay active normally. (6)

(1) Lieberman DE, et al. Foot strike patterns and collision forces in habitually barefoot versus shod runners. *Nature*. 2010;463:531–535. (2) Nix S, Smith M, Vicenzino B. Prevalence of hallux valgus in the general population: a systematic review. *J Foot Ankle Res*. 2010;3:21. (3) Shaw J, Murray K. Management of foot blisters in athletes. *Clin J Sport Med*. 2018;28(4):332–338. (4) Baur DA, et al. Prevalence and treatment of corns and calluses in adults. *J Foot Ankle Res*. 2019;12:12. (5) American Podiatric Medical Association. *Toenail Care Guidelines*. APMA. 2022. (6) Mickle KJ, et al. The prevalence of flat feet in adults: a systematic review. *J Foot Ankle Res*. 2013;6:13.