

## In This Issue

Healthy Vacation Feet

Eliminate Achey Pregnancy Feet

Foot Safety for Home Projects

Flip Flops Without Pain

## 10 Tips for Healthy Vacation Feet

It's summer and things are slowly opening back up! While most travel was halted for over a year, people are making up for lost time with trips. Here are tips to ensure foot pain doesn't ruin your vacation:

**Tip #1: Avoid breaking in new shoes on vacation.** It's always fun to bring new shoes, but if your trip includes walking tours, hikes or dancing, broken-in shoes are your best bet to help cushion and support your feet. This will help avoid blisters or abrasions that may happen with new shoes and increased activity.

**Tip #2: Check your children's shoes for fit and comfort.** Making sure your child's shoes aren't too big or small can help avoid issues while on vacation. Proper fit ensures shoes are providing adequate arch support and shock absorption for your child.

**Tip #3: Wear socks with your comfortable shoes.** Socks can help prevent friction from shoes that can cause blisters and calluses, but they can also keep you healthy. Socks provide a barrier to protect your feet from its surroundings. Heat-related build up of moisture in shoes and on feet can lead to athlete's foot or nail fungus (onychomycosis). Walking barefoot through airport security can expose your feet to bacteria and viruses that could lead to plantar warts and athlete's foot.

**Tip #4: Stretch your legs if traveling for more than two hours.** This will help with blood circulation to prevent dangerous clots in the legs known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Pumping your feet back and forth or wiggling your toes during travel can also help with circulation.

**Tip #5: Wear comfy shoes, especially if flying.** You never know how long lines will be, how far away your terminal is or if you'll need to run to make a connecting flight. Loose-fitting sandals like flip flops can increase your risk of tripping, falling or spraining your ankle. Sprains should be evaluated by a foot and ankle surgeon within 24 hours to ensure proper healing.

**Tip #6: Consider compression socks.** Compression socks can help prevent blood clots and DVTs by helping blood circulate through the legs and back to the lungs and heart.



**Tip #7: Pack your flip flops or sandals to wear sparingly.** Flip flops can be worn in place of walking barefoot in locker rooms and around pools where you may pick up athlete's foot, planter warts or toenail fungus. But opt for tennis shoes for sight-seeing, long hikes and more weightbearing activity.

**Tip #8: Keep a towel on the floor before getting in the shower or tub.** The towel can be used to prevent slipping when getting in and out of the shower and can also help dry your feet to avoid infection. It can also prevent contact with surfaces that might put you at risk for foot fungus or warts.

**Tip #9: Plan ahead and pack antifungal cream or powder.** Athlete's foot is a possibility when in public areas such as hotels or swimming areas. By bringing an antifungal product, you can be prepared to tackle this problem before it progresses.

**Tip #10: Have a small first-aid kit on hand.** Treat blisters by cleaning with saline solution, applying antibiotic cream and covering with a Band-Aid or gauze. Puncture wounds should be evaluated by a foot and ankle surgeon within 24 hours to properly clean the wound to prevent infection or other complications.

**If you need a foot and ankle surgeon while on vacation, visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org) to find one near you and when you're back home search for one closer to you for a follow-up appointment.**

## Eliminate Achey Feet During Pregnancy



Many women experience sore feet at some point during pregnancy as their bodies change to adapt to the growth and development of their little one. Though this time is a beautiful and wonderful process, it can wreak havoc on feet. Here are tips to help prepare you and your body for your baby's arrival.

**Tip #1: Reduce swelling:** Excess fluid buildup from the baby's weight and position can make feet throb and swell. You can reduce painful swelling by elevating your feet whenever you can. Stretching and wearing wider and

more supportive shoes can also help to reduce swelling during pregnancy.

**Tip #2: Wider shoes:** Shoe size can increase during pregnancy because of relaxin—the hormone which allows the pelvis to open during delivery. Relaxin makes the ligaments in feet more flexible causing them to spread out and even lengthen making normal shoes feel tight. Tighter shoes can lead to ingrown toe nails and toe trauma. This mixed with summer heat and moisture build up can also lead to things like nail fungus (onychomycosis) or thick toenails.

**Tip #3: Support your arch:** As your body adapts to the growing little one, fatigue and flattening of the arch (overpronation) can cause pain in the foot's arch ligament. This can be prevented by stretching your calves each morning and before or after exercise. Wearing supportive shoes around the house and avoiding going barefoot can also help to prevent arch problems.

**If foot pain continues during your pregnancy, visit a foot and ankle surgeon to discuss treatments to ease pain such as orthotics, physical therapy, supportive shoes or minor toenail procedures. Find a doctor near you at [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org).**

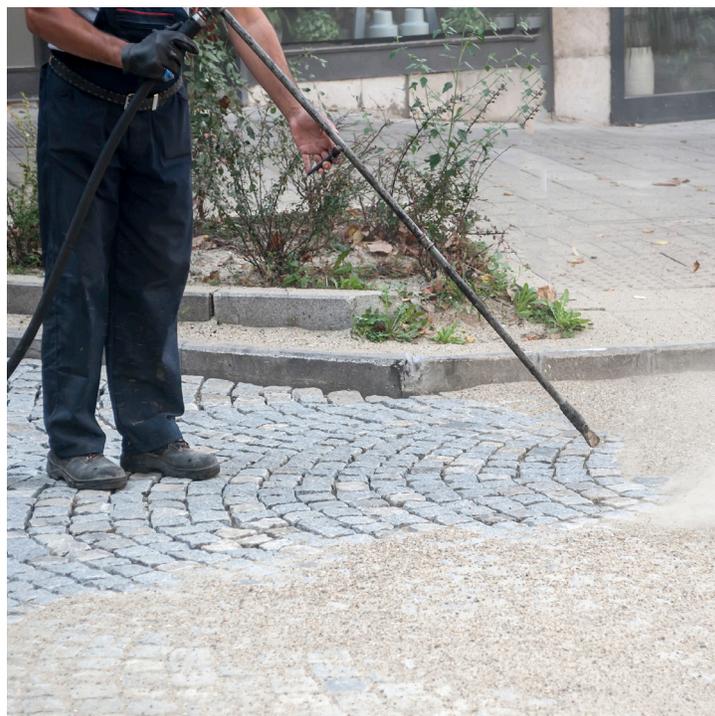
## Foot Safety for Home Projects

The pandemic forced many to stay home for the past year causing an uptick in home improvement projects including long over-do deep cleans and even renovations. As we head into summer and the projects extend to the home's exterior, here are ways to keep your feet healthy and protected.

**Power washing:** Power washers are great for cleaning the toughest of outdoor stains soapy water and a scrub brush simply can't do. When operating a power washer, make sure to wear fully close-toed shoes and pay careful attention of where you're spraying without getting too close to your feet. The pressure from a heavy-duty power washer is strong enough to take off the superficial layer of skin, especially on the toes as they're more sensitive.

**Ladders & Roofing:** Ladders are used for many home projects, big and small, so it might seem unnecessary to pay attention to what shoes you're wearing when only using it for a minute. However, repeated climbing without proper foot support can lead to painful neuromas or even slipping and falling. The same goes for any roofing projects where you need shoes with proper support and traction.

**Decking:** If you find yourself tackling a decking project, be sure to "bench" the flip flops and wear supportive, close-toed shoes. Whether it's ripping up existing deck boards or installing a new one, walking around splintered, jagged wood planks and discarded nails can be a recipe for disaster. One wrong step and the thin sole of flip flops and even your foot can easily be punctured.



**If you find yourself with an injury from a recent home project, contact a foot and ankle surgeon as soon as possible for proper assessment and treatment. Visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org) to find a physician near you.**

## Sport Flip Flops Without Pain



Summer is here and it is officially flip flop season! While it's nice to let your feet breathe in these casual sandals, flip flops shouldn't be your main footwear of choice all summer.

Flip flops lack arch support and stability for your foot, so wearing them too often can cause abnormal stress on the plantar fascia—the band of tissue extending from the heel to the base of the toes. This lack of support can result in plantar fasciitis causing pain in the heel immediately upon getting up in the morning or after periods of inactivity throughout the day. Pain can persist and take a long time to treat and subside.

To avoid developing issues, consider swapping the flip flops with more structured sandals with proper shock absorption and arch support. If you absolutely can't live without flip flops this summer, wear them sparingly to keep your feet in good shape.

**If you experience any foot pain this summer, visit a foot and ankle surgeon to have it examined and properly treated. Visit [FootHealthFacts.org](https://www.foothealthfacts.org) to find one near you.**