



Ageing Feet

Older feet naturally develop more problems because the skin tends to thin and lose its elasticity. Healing can take longer and wear and tear to the joints over the years may have caused some degree of arthritis.

But painful and uncomfortable feet aren't a natural part of growing old or something to "put-up with". A lot can be done to improve comfort, relieve pain and maintain mobility.

It's not too late to start caring!

Follow the SCP daily foot care routine and keep on the move. Keeping toenails cut and under control will help keep you mobile but you may need help with this from your chiropodist/podiatrist or a friend.

Keeping warm

Try to keep your feet as warm as possible, but don't cook them in front of the fire! Warm stockings or socks can help. Avoid anything too tight which can restrict your circulation or cramp your toes. Wearing fleece-lined boots or shoes or even an extra pair of socks will also keep you warm but do make sure your shoes aren't tight as a result. Bed socks are also a good idea.

Choosing the best footwear

The older you get, the more you need a shoe which holds your foot firmly in place to give adequate support. Throw out those sloppy old favourites as they may make you unstable when you walk.

Look for shoes with uppers made of soft leather or a stretchy man-made fabric which is also breathable. Avoid plastic 'easy clean' uppers which don't allow the foot to breathe and won't stretch to accommodate your own foot shape.

Many shoes have cushioning or shock absorbing soles to give you extra comfort while walking. When buying shoes, ensure that you can put them on and take them off easily. Check that the heel is held firmly in place - you'll find that a lace-up or Velcro fastening shoe will give more support and comfort than a slip-on.

Your shoes should be roomy enough, particularly, if you intend to wear them every day. If you suffer with swollen feet, it's a good idea to put your shoes on as soon as you wake up, before your feet have had a chance to swell.

Exercise

Exercise can help to keep feet healthy – it tones up muscles, helps to strengthen arches and stimulates blood circulation.

Further advice

You can ask your GP to refer you to your local NHS trust for free treatment. If you do not qualify for this, or need urgent attention you should contact a private podiatrist. Always ensure that any practitioners you visit are registered with the Health Professions Council and describe themselves as a chiropodist or a podiatrist.

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**All information from The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists Website*