
HEALTH NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 12

December 2011

Health Awareness for the month of December:

Foot Health Issues Related to Diabetes

Your feet are a Biological Masterpiece, But Subject to Many Ills

The human foot is a biological masterpiece. Its strong, flexible, and functional design enables it to do its job well and without complaint—if you take care of it and don't take it for granted.

The foot can be compared to a finely tuned race car, or a space shuttle, vehicles whose function dictates their design and structure. And like them, the human foot is complex, containing within its relatively small size 26 bones (the two feet contain a quarter of all the bones in the body), 33 joints, and a network of more than 100 tendons, muscles, and ligaments, to say nothing of blood vessels and nerves.

Tons of Pressure

The components of your feet work together, sharing the tremendous pressures of daily living. An average day of walking, for example, brings a force equal to several hundred tons to bear on the feet. This helps explain why your feet are more subject to injury than any other part of your body.

Foot ailments are among the most common of our health problems. Although some can be traced to heredity, many stem from the cumulative impact of a lifetime of abuse and neglect. Studies show that most Americans experience foot problems of a greater or lesser degree of seriousness at some time in their lives; nowhere near that many seek medical treatment, apparently because they mistakenly believe that discomfort and pain are normal and expectable.

There are a number of systemic diseases that are sometimes first detected in the feet, such as diabetes, circulatory disorders, anemia, and kidney problems. Arthritis, including gout, often attacks foot joints first.

Specialized Care

In order to keep your feet healthy, you should be familiar with the most common ills that affect them. Remember, though, that self-treatment can often turn a minor problem into a major one and is generally not advisable. You should see a podiatric physician when any of the following conditions occur or persist. www.apma.org