

NEWSLETTER

Your Journey Back to Better Health and Fitness

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**A STEP IN THE
RIGHT
DIRECTION:**

**PODIATRY &
FOOT HEALTH
EDITION**

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WHY LOOKING AFTER YOUR FEET MATTERS

Our feet carry us through thousands of steps every day, yet they are often one of the most overlooked parts of our health.

Foot pain, changes to the skin or nails, and problems with balance or mobility can all affect how comfortably and confidently we move. Small concerns can also become more serious if they are ignored—particularly for people living with diabetes, arthritis or circulation problems.

Regular foot care can help prevent problems, reduce discomfort and keep you active and independent. Whether you have a specific concern or simply want to keep your feet healthy, a podiatrist can provide expert advice, treatment and reassurance.

In this newsletter, we look at foot health for hikers, orthotics, gait analysis, foot ulcers and suitable moisturisers for people living with diabetes.

Healthy feet are the foundation of an active life—so it pays to take care of them.



PremierClinic

SHOCKWAVE THERAPY

Can it help your foot pain?



Persistent heel or foot pain can make walking, working and exercising uncomfortable. Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT) is a non-invasive treatment that may help people with conditions such as plantar fasciitis and Achilles tendinopathy, particularly when symptoms have not improved with

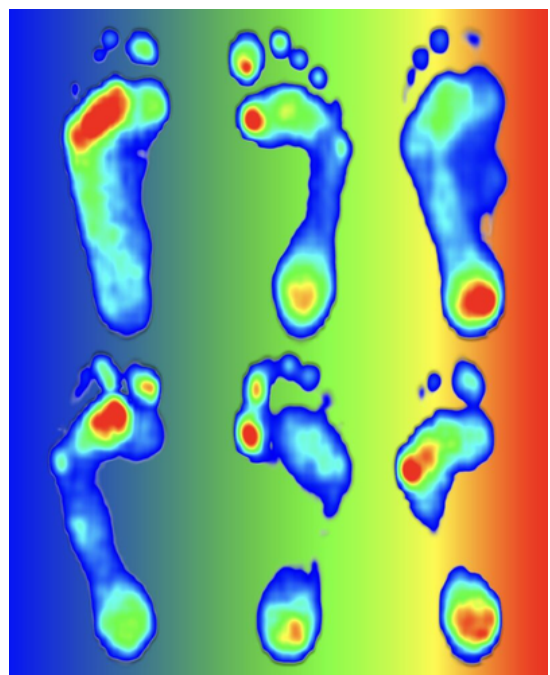
treatments such as exercises, physiotherapy, orthotics or rest.

Despite its name, there are no electrical shocks. A handheld device delivers controlled acoustic waves through the skin to the affected area. These waves are thought to increase blood flow, stimulate the body's natural healing response and help reduce pain.

Treatment is usually delivered over several short sessions. Some temporary discomfort, redness, bruising or swelling can occur, so a clinical assessment is essential to check that ESWT is suitable for you.

Shockwave therapy works best as part of a wider treatment plan that may include strengthening exercises, load management, suitable footwear and professional advice. The aim is not only to ease pain, but to improve movement and help you return to the activities you enjoy.

Struggling with persistent heel or Achilles pain? Premier Clinic can assess your symptoms and advise whether shockwave therapy may be suitable for you.



FOOT ORTHOTICS

Foot orthotics are specially designed insoles that support the feet, redistribute pressure and improve comfort and function. They may help reduce pain associated with plantar heel pain, high arches and symptomatic workers who stand for prolonged periods, but they are not a one-size-fits-all solution—an individual assessment helps ensure the right orthotic is selected for your condition, lifestyle and footwear. The way we walk is unique and small changes in how the foot meets the ground can place extra strain on particular muscles,

joints and soft tissues. Gait analysis allows us to look beyond what can be seen during a standard foot examination and understand how your feet function while you are moving.

Using Footscan technology, we can measure both how much pressure is placed beneath different areas of the feet and how long that pressure remains there during each step. This combination is known as plantar pressure impulse.



An area may not experience the highest peak pressure, but if it remains loaded for longer, step after step, the cumulative stress can still become significant. Your results are considered alongside your symptoms, medical history, footwear and a physical assessment. If an area of excessive loading is identified, a tailored treatment plan may include gait retraining, appropriate footwear, strength/mobility work, and Phits 3D printed orthoses that help to redistribute pressure more effectively. Gait analysis is not simply about producing a colourful pressure map. It helps us understand why discomfort may be occurring and select an approach that supports more comfortable and efficient movement.



FOOT HEALTH FOR HIKERS

Protecting your Feet on the Trails

Hiking is excellent for cardiovascular fitness, strength and endurance, but long distances and uneven ground can place considerable strain on the feet and ankles. Repeated impact, friction, steep climbs and descents, and prolonged weight-bearing can gradually lead to pain or injury.

Common hiking-related problems include blisters, plantar fascia strain, ankle sprains, calluses, toenail irritation and pressure-related pain. Walking downhill can push the toes against the front of the boot, while rough or uneven terrain makes the muscles, tendons and ligaments work harder to maintain balance and stability.

Start with the Right Footwear

Walking shoes or boots should fit securely without squeezing the toes and provide suitable support and grip for the terrain. Wear them before attempting a long hike rather than taking brand-new footwear straight onto the trail.

Moisture-wicking socks can help keep the feet dry, reduce friction and lower the risk of blisters. Trim your toenails straight across before longer walks and consider carrying blister plasters or dressings so that you can protect any uncomfortable "hot spots" early.

Build Up Gradually

Increase your walking distance and difficulty gradually, allowing your feet and ankles time to adapt. Strengthening, stretching and adequate recovery between longer hikes can also help reduce the risk of overuse injuries.

After a hike, check your feet for blisters, redness, swelling, pressure areas, nail changes or broken skin. Do not ignore persistent heel or arch pain, repeated blisters, numbness, tingling, ankle instability or discomfort that worsens as you continue walking.

If foot pain is affecting your ability to enjoy the outdoors, a podiatry assessment can help identify the cause and provide advice on footwear, exercises, treatment or orthotics.



FOOT HEALTH

Diabetes, Foot Ulcers & Moisturising

COMMON LOCATIONS OF ARTERIAL ULCERS

Typical ischemic ulcer sites in peripheral arterial disease (PAD)



Diabetes can affect the nerves and blood supply to the feet. This may make injuries harder to feel and slower to heal, allowing a small cut, blister or crack to develop into an ulcer. Arterial ulcers are caused by poor circulation and commonly appear on the toes, heel, top or outer edge of the foot, or around the ankle. They may be painful, deep and “punched out,” with cool, pale or shiny surrounding skin. Diabetes-related ulcers often develop over pressure points and may be painless due to reduced sensation.

Any ulcer requires prompt professional assessment. Dry skin can crack and allow infection to enter. Apply moisturiser daily to the tops, soles and heels to keep the skin soft and protected. Avoid applying it between the toes or directly onto broken skin. A podiatrist can advise whether a urea-based foot cream is suitable.

Check your feet every day for cuts, blisters, cracks, redness, swelling, heat or colour changes. If you have diabetes and notice a wound, ulcer, blackened skin or signs of infection, contact us immediately.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR HEALTHY FEET	HOW TO MOISTURIZE SAFELY
Moisturize daily Best when applied after bathing. Focus on dry areas Apply to the tops, bottoms, heels, and sides of the feet. Avoid between the toes Moisturizing between toes can promote moisture and infection. Check your feet every day Look for dry skin, cracks, redness, or other changes. Good skin care reduces risk Healthy skin is a strong barrier against ulcers and infection.	1 Cleanse gently Use mild soap and lukewarm water; pat feet dry. 2 Apply moisturizer Use a urea-containing moisturizer (10–20% if possible). Apply a thin layer to all dry areas. 3 Let it absorb Allow it to absorb before putting on socks or shoes. 4 Check routinely At least once daily—earlier if you notice any changes.

TALK TO YOUR CLINICIAN
If you have severe dryness, cracks, open sores, or are unsure what to use, ask your foot care provider for personalized advice.



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