



# Healthy Winter Feet

## Maintain healthy feet during the winter

Winter weather can be cold and damp, so it's important to take certain precautions to ensure that your feet stay warm and dry. Proper foot care in the winter is especially critical for people with diabetes and circulation problems, like Raynaud's syndrome.

**Below are some tips that will keep your feet looking and feeling healthy this winter.**

### Keep your feet clean and dry

Wearing boots and thick socks may keep your feet warm and toasty in the winter, but it can also cause them to sweat a lot. Damp feet get mold more easily and are prone to bacterial infections. This is essential for those that suffer from Raynaud's syndrome or for those that suffer from poor circulation.

### Moisturize, moisturize, moisturize

Skin becomes dry in the winter due to the lack of humidity and indoor heat. It's very important to apply moisturizing creams or lotion to the feet, especially the heels. Remember to avoid placing cream between the toes and apply right after the shower as it helps to seal in moisture. The elderly should moisturize their feet one to two times per day.

### Choose the right socks

The best way to prevent cold feet and heat loss is to keep your tootsies warm and dry. Socks made of cotton and wool absorb moisture. Excess moisture can cause the skin to cool down more quickly and potentially lead to frostbite.

### Wear comfortable boots

Wear boots that fit comfortably and that aren't too tight. Tight footwear can decrease blood flow, making it harder to keep your feet warm and increasing the risk of frostbite. You should be able to wiggle your toes, but your heel, instep and the ball of your foot should be immobilized. Your boots should have a solid base, supportive heel, laces or straps to ensure you're able to remain stable on wet and slippery surfaces.

If you're buying winter footwear for your children, such as winter boots, skates or ski boots, avoid the temptation to buy a larger size in order to get two seasons of wear out of the shoes. It is crucial for footwear to fit properly right away in order to prevent chafing, blisters and foot injuries.

### Dry your boots and shoes out

Prior to going back outside in your boots and shoes again, be sure to dry them out thoroughly. This will help prevent your feet from getting cold too quickly as well as prevent the growth of fungi and bacteria.

### Wash your feet every day

Wash your feet thoroughly every day with soap and water. Keeping your feet clean can prevent toenail fungus and other unpleasant problems. Make sure that your feet are completely dry before you put socks and shoes on again. Change your socks daily.

Maintaining healthy feet is a large component of your overall health. The podiatrists at SMG are available to assist with any type of foot problem to keep you healthy all year long. **Call (914) 723-8100 for an appointment.**