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A PODIATRIST'S VIEW ON AGEING FEET

As we age, we naturally develop more problems with our feet due to normal daily wear and tear. Foot pain can be debilitating. As we only have one pair of feet, it's important to take good care of them. Foot pain can also lead to issues with walking and exercising which are an important part of health and wellbeing as we age. As long as we take routine care of our feet, serious problems can usually be avoided eg. foot ulcers, however, ageing can also mean that we develop other conditions, such as diabetes and arthritis, which in some cases can affect the foot and lead to requiring treatment.

General signs of ageing feet include more regular aches and pains, developing bunions, signs of clawing of the toes, toenails getting harder, thicker, corns and callouses, along with general circulatory problems. Podiatrists (Chiropodist's) can help to improve comfort, relieve pain and maintain mobility.

General foot care and protection

Keeping toenails cut and under control is key as nails that become too long can press against the end of the shoe and the constant pressure can cause soreness, infection and ulceration. Toenails that have been poorly cut can also become ingrown.

Additionally, checking your feet daily is necessary, washing and drying, then moisturising them (but not between the toes) will help them keep supple. We also start to lose the fatty pads that cushion the bottom of the feet, causing corns and callouses.

Keeping warm is also important, but do not warm them too close to the fire! Warm stockings or socks can help and 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.

When should I see a podiatrist about it?

As we get older conditions like diabetes or circulatory problems can affect the foot. Regular Podiatric consultations are necessary, assessing the feet and common problems like corns, cracked skin and ingrown

toenails can be successfully treated.

Treatments depend on your own specific ailments and therefore the best advice is to visit a Podiatrist if your foot care routine is not alleviating your symptoms or you can no longer to manage your footcare.

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