

## Whew, Those Shoes Are Ripe!

Ever have complaints from your friends in the locker room; or your spouse When you take the shoes off at home? Many of us have a foot odor problem. There are reasons for this. And there are steps we can take to remedy it.

Foot odor is usually from one of four reasons. And the remedies often overlap. Fungal infection, allergic reaction, moisture and poor hygiene are the main causes...

Fungal infection or athlete's foot (tinea pedis) is an infection of the skin on the feet. Often the nails are involved. The skin peels, has hard blisters, redness, has burning and itches. A chronic case can look like dry flay calluses. Too much sweating can contribute to the problem. To address this problem, use an antiperspirant like an underarm deodorant with aluminum chloride. Use absorbent socks and change them twice or three times a day. Alternate shoes; don't wear the same pair two days in a row. Wash feet and between the toes daily and dry between the toes. Use an antifungal or absorbent powder in the shoes. For fungal nails or if blisters weep, see your doctor.

An allergic reaction will cause a buildup of dead skin and blister contents. Fungus And bacteria feed on this. Check the material of the shoes and insoles to see if they Irritate your skin. You may need a topical or even oral corticosteroid so you should consult with your doctor on a referral to an allergist.

Moisture is common especially in the summer and with foreign made shoes with Occlusive non-porous material. Use the antiperspirant, alternate shoes and change absorbent socks. If you use powder, clean out the excess from the shoes especially the toe boxes regularly. If you use any cream or topical medication, check for allergies to the ingredients.

Hygiene is a more common problem than expected. How many of us wash and dry well between the toes? How many remove the debris that accumulates way deep in the toe box of the shoe? Think you look cool wearing shoes without socks? It's like wearing the same socks day in and day out. Even Sonny Crockett wouldn't do that. Check the soles and nail folds for dirt and toe jam. The nails accumulate soaps, creams, fuzz and skin. Wear thongs or surgical slippers in locker rooms, hotel rooms and airport inspection lines.

If foot odor is a problem always use common sense and consult with your podiatrist or physician if you must start treatment.

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