Love your Feet

April is Foot Health Awareness Month and it’s no secret that exercise can work wonders for your physique, but what about your feet, which bear the brunt of impact during a workout? Much of what we do in the name of fitness can detract from foot health. Studies show that 75 percent of Americans will experience foot health problems at some point in their lives. Yet, over half of Americans believe that foot pain is normal and do little to stop or prevent it. That is why the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) has declared April as Foot Health Awareness Month—to draw attention to this often-neglected, yet hardworking part of the body.

The APMA estimates that our feet carry us at least 75,000 miles by the age of fifty, and yet a recent survey reveals that a full 70 percent of Americans have never visited a podiatrist to ensure optimal foot health. Foot care is especially important for athletes, whose rigorous physical lifestyle can wreck havoc on their feet.

"Americans engage in a variety of sports and fitness activities that, although beneficial to overall health, accelerate wear-and-tear in the feet and ankles," explains Dr. Robin Ross, association member. "Fortunately, the foot and ankle are well designed to handle this stress and support the body for a lifetime, but certain conditions, if undetected and untreated, can seriously sideline even the most fit individual. With proper detection, intervention and care," Dr. Ross adds, "most problems can be lessened and even be prevented."

How to get healthy feet without sacrificing workouts? Follow these guidelines and get your feet in shape for spring:

- If the shoe fits: Ensuring that shoes fit properly goes a long way toward preventing many common foot problems. Podiatric physicians recommend replacing footwear before it gets so old it no longer supports the foot properly. When shopping for shoes, always wear the appropriate type of socks and purchase shoes that have: Sturdy, proper fit and width; Leather or canvas uppers; Flexible soles only at the ball of the foot; Cushioning and arch supports; and Ample room for toes. "Combating athlete's foot: Wash feet daily with soap and water and dry them completely, using a hair dryer between feet and shoes. Always wear a well cushioned sock for reinforcement in athletic shoes, preferably one with a fiber content that can wick away some of the perspiration. "Conquering odor: Rub cornstarch or roll-on antiperspirant directly on the soles of the feet, and spray Lysol into shoes. "Avoiding ingrown nails: An ingrown toenail is a painful condition characterized by the nail digging into the surrounding skin. To prevent ingrown toenails always remember to trim them straight across, and select a shoe with plenty of room in the toe box.

- Preventing blisters, corns and calluses: Calluses grow quickly on dry, dead skin, so be sure to use that lotion and pumice stone regularly. It is also a good idea to wear supportive shoes with a wide toe box and low heel. Use non-medicated footpads to cushion areas prone to corns, and affix adhesive moleskin to the inside of shoes to buffer areas prone to blisters. Keeping feet dry in properly fitting shoes and wearing socks as a cushion between feet and shoes also aid in preventing blisters. Should one develop, never pop it; carefully open a corner of the blister, drain, apply antibiotic cream and cover with a bandage.

"Most Americans have their car tires checked each year, so why not their feet?" asks Dr. Ross. A doctor of podiatric medicine can address all of these conditions, as well as make an important contribution to an athlete’s total health and play a role in the success of a fitness program. For a list of podiatrists in your area, visit the APMA Web site at www.apma.org or call 1-800-FOOTCARE for more foot health information.

Source: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m138w/is_200204/pou_3/2spqmgw0.shtml#00000042

Pitch the Pop

Are you one of the millions of people who cannot start their day without a soda pop? If so, you are not alone. In 2004, Americans spent nearly $66 billion dollars on carbonated beverages.

Consider this: One 20oz bottle of regular pop has around 17 teaspoons of sugar. This is bad enough in an adult, but imagine the effect that has on a child’s smaller body. So what does all that sugar fizz do?

Tooth Trauma

The double whammy of sugar and acid combine to wear away our tooth enamel and increase the risk of decay.

The acid (which gives fizz) takes calcium out of the tooth leaving teeth softer and wear prone to decay. Diet pop contains less sugar, but the same amount of acid.

Bad to the Bones

It is believed that calcium is pulled out from the bones of pop drinkers to buffer the acid. Studies have shown that girls who drink pop regularly have a lower bone density than those who don’t drink pop at all. Also, pop often replaces milk and other calcium-rich beverages and you can see how our bones can suffer.

Weight Gain

A 20oz regular pop contains around 250 calories. You get the same number of calories in 4 large apples, 80 baby carrots or 15 cups of air popped corn. Give up one 20oz pop a day for a year and save 6200 teaspoons of sugar!

What else?

Persons who drink pop daily have an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, being overweight and more likely to burp more and have more stomach irritations.

Would you like to re-think your drink?

Water is always a good choice. Low-fat milk, unsweetened tea, and flavored waters are healthier options.

Source: Michigan Diabetes Outreach Network, Handout 2008
Coping with Pet Allergies

Sniffing and sneezing! It may not be a cold at all. Your pet may be the cause.

Pet allergies are common and can be serious, especially if you have asthma. Many people don’t want to give pets away, though. If you can’t bear to find a new home for Fluffy, you can learn to manage the situation.

Know your allergy and its causes. People have different sensitivities and reactions, from mild to severe. Most pet allergies come from cats and dogs, but birds and rodents can also trigger allergic reactions. Talk with your doctor. Allergies can be identified by skin or blood tests.

There are no such things as allergy-free cats and dogs. Some people think certain breeds are “less allergic” than others or that shorthaired pets cause fewer allergies than longhaired animals. It’s not a hair issue. Glands in a pet’s skin produce proteins (called allergens) that stick to fur or feathers. Allergen dry as tiny particles. They then float through the air. This is known as pet dander. Allergens are also found in a pet’s saliva and urine.

Allergens circulate in the air and stay on carpets and furniture for weeks or months. When you come in contact with allergen-breathing it in skin contact—it can trigger an allergic reaction.

How can you prevent or reduce reaction to pet allergens? One choice is to not have a pet unless you know you are not allergic. If you already have a pet, find it a new home. If you don’t want to give it away, it’s possible to reduce allergic symptoms if you take some strong precautions.

For example:

- **Wash your pet weekly.** Certain products claim to reduce allergens when sprayed on fur, but some studies show they’re less effective than a weekly bath. Cats can use baths, too. Ask your veterinarian about how to do this properly. Use shampoo the vet recommends.

- **Keep pets out of the bedroom.** This means all the time. Use a high efficiency air filter (such as HEPA or electrostatic cleaners) in bedrooms. Even after your pet is banned, its dander can get into your bedroom on clothes or other objects and stay on furniture, carpets and bedding. Use special bedding covers that don’t let allergen particles get into mattresses and pillows.

- **Limit dander-catches in all rooms.** Replace drapes and slatted blinds with flat, easy-to-wipe-down shades. Choose wood, tile, or linoleum floors instead of carpets.

- **Wash your hands and clothes** to remove allergen after playing with a pet.

- **Talk to your doctor about allergies.** You may be allergic to other irritants, such as smoke or pollen. Allergy shots can improve your symptoms but can’t eliminate them completely. They work by gradually desensitizing your immune system to allergens.

Steroidal and antihistamine nose sprays and antihistamine pills help control symptoms. For people with asthma, which is easily triggered by pet allergens, many medications, sprays and inhalers are available.

A mixture of approaches—good housecleaning methods and medical treatments—gives you the best chance of controlling your allergy while still living with your pet.

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**Which plastic water bottles don’t leach chemicals?**

Plastic water bottles are very convenient for carting water around when we are on the go, as they don’t break if we drop them. It is worth paying attention to the type of plastic your water bottle is made of, to ensure that the chemicals in the plastic do not leach into the water. If you taste plastic, you are drinking it, so get yourself another bottle.

To be certain that you are choosing a bottle that does not leach, check the recycling symbol on your bottle. If it is a #2 HDPE (high density polyethylene), or a #4 LDPE (low density polyethylene), or a #5 PP (polypropylene), your bottle is fine. The type of plastic bottle in which water is usually sold is usually a #1, and is only recommended for one time use. Do not refill it. Better to use a reusable water bottle, and fill it with your own filtered water from home, and keep these single-use bottles out of the landfill.

Unfortunately, those fabulous colorful hard plastic lexan bottles made with polycarbonate plastics and identified by the #7 recycling symbol, may leach BPA. (Bisphenol A is a xenoestrogen, a known endocrine disruptor, meaning it disturbs the hormonal messaging in our bodies). Synthetic chemical endocrine disruptors are particularly devastating to babies and young children. For more of the science on the effects of BPA on our endocrine system etc., see these studies: Environmental Health Perspectives Journal. Nalgene, the company that manufactures the lexan bottles also makes #2 HDPE bottles in the same sizes and shapes, so we do have a viable alternative. Check the recycling numbers on all your plastic food containers as well, and gradually move to storing all food in glass or ceramic. Store water in glass if possible and out of direct sunlight. For more info go to: Plastic Water Bottles Update

Resource: www.wellnesstip.ca
Natural Appetite Suppressants

Natural diet aids are few and far between. Natural diet aids that don’t involve swallowing horse-sized pills are almost nonexistent. Over the years many have tried a few successful means of naturally suppressing their appetite without the aid of pills. Here are some great appetite suppressants that may help you in the battle of the bulge.

Apples  An apple a day keeps cravings at bay. High-fiber foods like apples generally require more chewing time, giving your body extra time to register the fact that you’re no longer hungry. Therefore, you’re less likely to overeat. One study in Brazil found that women who ate the equivalent of three small apples a day as part of a healthy diet lost significantly more weight than those who didn’t eat apples. And apples are also a natural anti-inflammatory.

Pine Nuts contain the highest amount of protein of any nut or seed. In Siberia, a handful of pine nuts are traditionally taken with a meal to create a feeling of fullness. What’s the secret ingredient? Pine nuts contain pinolenic acid, a naturally occurring polyunsaturated fat that actually stimulates two powerful hunger suppressing hormones. Both hormones play a major role in signaling to the brain that you’re no longer hungry. Therefore, you’re less likely to overeat.

Flaxseed  contains the best known plant source of omega-3 fats but raw flaxseeds are even better, especially for appetite control. In addition to the omega-3, one ounce of flaxseeds provides the added benefit of 8 grams of fiber. The more fiber you eat at any meal or snack, the slower the rise in your blood sugar, helping to keep the hunger hormones at bay. Flaxseeds can be tossed onto salads, thrown into smoothies or sprinkled over vegetables. Studies at the National Cancer Institute show that flaxseeds have cancer preventive properties and lowers cholesterol.

Tips to Increase Fruits and Vegetables in your Diet

Eat a variety of food groups from all the food groups every day. Check the strategies you can use to incorporate fruits and veggies daily:

- Keep cleaned fruits and vegetables in the refrigerator -- ready to eat.
- Have vegetables with low-fat dip for a snack.
- Try commercial prepackaged salads and stir-fry mixes to save prep time.
- Add vegetables to casseroles, stews and soups.
- Drink 100% fruit juice instead of fruit-flavored drinks or soda pop.
- Have fruit for dessert.
- Keep a bowl of apples, bananas and/or oranges on the table.
- Choose a side salad made with a variety of leafy greens.

Pack fresh or dried fruits for quick snacks.

Blue Cheese Stuffed Turkey Burgers

We are all waiting for spring to come and summer to be upon us. As we wait, the snow melts and the weather warms up, so it’s time to fire up the grill! Here is a healthy twist on the same old burger with some new cheese! This would be great with your favorite spring/summer salad! Bon Appetite!

INGREDIENTS

1 lb ground turkey
4 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 onion, chopped fine
1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning
Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 chunk of blue cheese, cut in 1 inch chunks (about 4 chunks)
4 hamburger buns (preferably whole-grain)
Tomatoes, lettuce, onion (burger fixings)

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine first five ingredients. Mix well to combine. Shape mixture into 8 patties, each about 1/2 inch thick.
2. Place blue cheese on one patty and cover with the other, and form into a new patty with blue cheese in the center.
3. Heat grill to medium-high heat. Place turkey burger on and cook 4 to 6 minutes per side, until cooked through. Sprinkle some crumbled blue cheese on top, if desired.
4. Serve burgers on buns with burger fixings.

Source: http://www.recipezaar.com/294168
**Natural Appetite Suppressants, Continued**

**Oatmeal** Real oatmeal -- not instant -- is one of the healthiest carbohydrates. It's low on the glycemic load scale and has a high fiber content, so it enters your bloodstream slowly and keeps you full for a long time. One bowl of oatmeal consumed daily can reduce cholesterol 8 to 23 percent. For breakfast or as a snack, a small bowl makes an excellent hunger reducer. We suggest adding a little butter or a handful of pine nuts for longer-lasting fullness. Or how about sprinkling on some ground flaxseed or cinnamon?

**Salad** If you want to avoid overeating, try eating a small salad before a meal. The fiber helps slow the entrance of glucose (sugar) into the bloodstream, making you less likely to be hungry. According to one study published in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association, when 42 women ate a simple 100-calorie salad before dinner, they consumed 12 percent less calories during the meal, even without trying to diet or limit their intake. Try varying your salad choices with spinach, mesculin, endives and cabbages -- all types of greens will help curb your cravings.

**Soup** is one of the best kept secrets to appetite control and weight loss. Research at Pennsylvania State University shows that men and women consuming two servings of low-calorie soup daily lost a whopping 50 percent more weight than those consuming the exact same number of calories with snack foods. The secret is soup's combination of high water and low calories. Make sure to choose broths or vegetable soups, not their creamy-rich cousins.

**Drink Green** Green drinks are becoming more popular and are now available premade in many grocery stores. The best ones are made with a mix of high-chlorophyll, detoxifying organic grasses like wheatgrass and vegetables (like spinach).

**Whey Protein Powder** Whey protein powder can help you lose weight and build muscle. New studies suggest that whey may have an impact on food intake through its effect on hormones that influence a feeling of fullness. In one study, participants consumed a liquid meal consisting of either whey or casein and 90 minutes later were allowed to eat freely at a buffet table. The whey group consumed significantly less calories. Whey also supports the immune system and can help you lose weight and build muscle. New studies suggest that whey may have an impact on food intake through its effect on hormones that influence a feeling of fullness. In one study, participants consumed a liquid meal consisting of either whey or casein and 90 minutes later were allowed to eat freely at a buffet table. The whey group consumed significantly less calories. Whey also supports the immune system and can lower your blood pressure.

**Umeboshi Plums** Can’t control your sweet tooth? In Eastern medicine, foods are regarded as having certain properties and a craving for one kind can best be treated by eating its opposite taste. Umeboshi plums -- basically pickled plums -- are the ultimate in “contractive” foods. The founder of the Natural Gourmet Institute for Healing and Culinary Arts, Dr. Annemarie Colbin, recommends them highly for sugar cravings. They are widely available at specialty stores and Asian grocers. Need a quick fix? Try dipping a chopstick or spoon into a jar of umeboshi plum paste and licking it off next time you have a sugar craving. The sourness will give you a jolt.

**Water** So you need a new cure to stop you from eating that tasty snack in the kitchen. Water is the solution for you! It’s recommended that humans drink 8 glasses of water a day. Water carries out toxins in your body, streams nutrients around your body, and cleanses it too. Sometimes when we think that we’re hungry our body just really wants something good old H2O. Water will give your tummy that full feeling like you just ate a big meal. Try drinking a glass before a meal!