

Foot Sense

Offices of Dr. Rion Berg

206-368-7000

FOOT AND ANKLE CENTER OF LAKE CITY



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15 Hacks for Avoiding Winter Foot Problems

In the winter many of us love to be in the mountains snowshoeing, skiing, or snowboarding, while the rest of us would rather be indoors reading a good book in front of a roaring fire. Either way you could be faced with winter foot problems you'd rather avoid. Here are 15 hacks to help prevent or alleviate these problems.

Dry or Cracked Heels

Cracked and dry heels have many causes but dry, wintry air is definitely one of them. While we usually have plenty of moisture in Seattle at this time of year, if you continuously use a wood burning stove, baseboard heat, or one of those portable heaters you can dry out the air and your feet can become dry and cracked. Besides changing your heat source here are some other ways to prevent dry skin.

- Use a moisturizer made for feet such as Gold Bond Ultimate Softening Foot Cream with Shea Butter or Curel Foot Therapy. Use as often as needed but be sure to apply before bedtime and cover with socks if you can. For more severe cracking consider a cream with urea such as Udderly Smooth Extra Care Cream.
- Gel socks - during the day or night wear gel socks to soothe and heal your feet.
- For a less expensive alternative to keeping your feet smooth, try Vaseline with socks at bedtime.
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Easy Spiced Hot Fruit Bake

- 2 cup sliced apples
- 2 cups pear slices
- 1 1/2 cup fresh cranberries
- 1 cup pineapple chunks (save the juice)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/3 cup coconut palm sugar (unrefined) or brown sugar
- 1 tbsp maple syrup, agave, or honey
- 1 tsp cinnamon (extra for topping)
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 stick melted butter (4 to 5 tbsp melted vegan butter can be substitute)

- 1/3 cup walnut or pecans

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, toss your fruit and add in 1-2 tsp lemon juice. Set aside.
2. In another glass bowl, combine your melted butter, spices, and honey or maple syrup.
3. Mix in a few tablespoons of your leftover pineapple juice as well.
4. Add this sugar/butter mixture to your fruit and coat evenly.
5. Pour fruit evenly in a 9x12 baking dish.
6. Add walnuts or pecans
7. Pour the leftover sugar/butter/oil mixture on top baking for 1 hr at 300 degrees.



Heel Pain

[Heel pain](#) is very common in people with flat feet. And in the winter when we're not as active, calf muscles can tighten up. As soon as we hit the slopes or do some snowshoeing we're pulling on those tight calves which in turn can activate our heel pain.

- Get yourself loosened up before you start your activities. Try doing some [dynamic warm-ups](#). Tight calves are one of the key factors in developing plantar fasciitis.
- Weight gain can cause your arches to fall, making plantar fasciitis more likely. Check your shoe size so you can make sure you're wearing shoes or ski boots that fit.
- Make an appointment with a [Seattle podiatrist](#) to get your feet checked. Shoe inserts or orthotics can correct your faulty foot mechanics.

Fractures

Winter sports enthusiasts put themselves at greater risk for ankle, foot and toe fractures. The rest of us can slip on slick sidewalks and stairways. Some hacks to help prevent falls are:

- Keep your body physically fit for your favorite outdoor sport. Your body needs to be able to handle the twists and turns that are inevitable for skiers and snowboarders.
- Wear the right footgear for the sport you love and make sure they fit properly. Also, wear low heels and shoes that will give you some traction.
- Many people love to train on Seattle's staircases. Make sure the steps aren't icy.

Raynaud's Syndrome

Do your toes and fingers turn bluish-white when they're exposed to the cold? Then you very likely have Raynaud's Syndrome. This syndrome is not dangerous but it is uncomfortable. The color changes as a result of small spasms in the blood vessels which reduce the blood flow to your extremities.

Some hacks to help Raynaud's Syndrome are:

- Reduce or stop smoking.
- Check with your physicians about your medications.
- Wear warm socks that wick away moisture (moisture can make your feet colder). If you're a runner, try a pair of [Balega running socks](#).

Blisters

Dry feet and friction cause blisters. Participating winter sports will make blisters more likely. Here are some simple hacks to prevent them.

- Wear shoes that fit. Your heels are common places for blisters, particularly when they can't stay in place.
- Wear socks that wick away moisture (sweat can also cause blisters).
- Use a piece of surgical tape on the areas of your feet that tend to blister.

Be A Love! Give Someone the Gift of Socks This Holiday Season

At this time of year many of us want to reach out beyond our immediate families to brighten up someone's else's day. Particularly someone who is less fortunate and may be homeless. But what can you do that's meaningful? At this time of year food drives, lunches, and dinners are abundant. But what many people living on the streets need are a warm pair of socks.

You can buy socks and hand them out yourself or you can contribute through our annual Sock Drive for Mary's Place. Drop off a new pair of socks anytime between now and December 20th and we'll bring them to Mary's Place in time for the holidays!



If you're experiencing foot pain or diabetes and need to see a podiatrist, call the Foot and Ankle Center of Lake City at 206-368-7000 for an appointment, often same day. You can also request an appointment online.