

Foot Facts

1. Seventy-five percent of us will experience foot health problems of varying degrees of severity at one time or another in our lives. Even Socrates knew how much feet could hurt. He once said, "When your feet hurt, you hurt all over," an expression later used as a slogan by the Dr. Scholl Company.
2. Despite the fact that so many people experience foot pain, only a fraction of people with foot pain seek medical treatment. The reason? Many people have the erroneous notion that their feet are supposed to hurt.
3. Each foot usually contains twenty-six main bones--plus an extra pair of small ones known as sesamoids, for a total of 28. But some people can have more or less. This makes up around one quarter of all the bones in your body. There are also 33 joints, 107 ligaments, 19 muscles and tendons. The great Renaissance artist Leonardo Da Vinci, the first individual to create accurate anatomical drawings of the foot, called them "a masterpiece of engineering and a work of art".
4. There are approximately 250,000 sweat glands in a pair of feet, and they excrete as much as half a pint of moisture each day.
5. Your two feet strike the ground a combined total of about 1,800 times in the average mile of walking.
6. The average person takes 8,000 to 10,000 steps per day. That's equivalent to a combined total of about 5 miles of walking accumulated through the day, or about 115,000 miles in a lifetime. That's more than four times the circumference of the globe. And it's a distance nearly half way from the earth to the moon.
7. When you walk, the forces borne by your feet are about one and one-half times your body weight. When you're running, it can be three or four times your weight. When you jump, forces can exceed eight times your body weight
8. Women have about four times as many foot problems as men; lifelong patterns of wearing high heels and other inappropriate shoes are the primary cause.
9. Shopping for shoes is best done in the afternoon, as your feet tend to swell a little during the day, and it's best to buy shoes to fit them then. Have your feet measured every time you purchase shoes, and do it while you're standing. When you try on shoes, try them on both feet; many people have one foot larger than the other, and it's best to fit the larger one.
10. Walking is the best exercise for your feet. It also contributes to your general health by improving circulation, contributing to weight control. and promoting all-around well being.
11. Your feet mirror your general health. Such conditions as arthritis, diabetes, nerve and circulatory disorders can show their initial symptoms in the feet -- so foot ailments can be your first sign of more serious medical problems.
12. Speaking of diabetes, a century ago, the only practical way of knowing whether a patient had diabetes was to discern whether there was sugar in the patient's urine. And the only way to know this was to taste it.

13. As a person's income increases, the prevalence of foot problems decreases.
14. Podiatric physicians are four times less likely to use costly inpatient services than other physicians.
15. There are approximately 11,000 podiatric physicians practicing in the U.S. and Canada.
16. Over the past 10 years, an average of 592 new podiatric physicians graduated yearly from the 7 podiatric medical colleges.
17. On average, the podiatric physician is 42 years old and has been in practice 13 years.
18. Only a little more than 14 percent of podiatric physicians are female.
19. Dr. Tom Amberry, an octogenarian and retired podiatrist is the world champion in shooting free throws. He recently made a record 307 consecutive free throws in 59 minutes, besting his previous record by two. But this hardly compares to his 1993 record of 2,750 consecutive free throws in 12 hours.
20. Saint Servatus is the patron saint of foot troubles, lameness and rheumatism.
21. Doc Martens shoes were actually invented by a German doctor named Dr. Maertens, who invented them after a skiing accident in 1945.