

Foot Facts

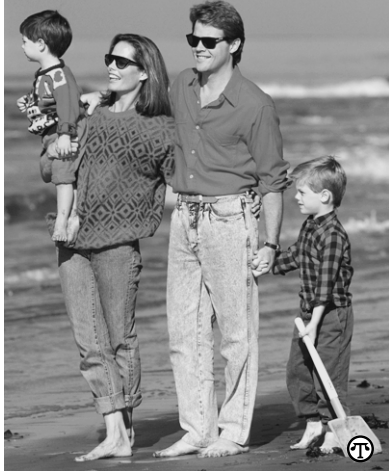
Foot Puncture Wounds Need Prompt Treatment

(NAPSA)—Anyone who enjoys walking barefoot should know, those seemingly minor puncture wounds on the soles of your feet should be treated promptly to prevent serious infections.

“Going barefoot heightens risk for puncture wounds, which require different treatment from cuts because the tiny holes often harbor foreign matter under the skin,” said Matthew Roberts, DPM, FACFAS of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS). “Glass, nails, needles and seashells are common offenders. Regardless of the substance, anything that remains in the wound increases your chances for complications.”

Puncture wounds in the feet too often are superficially treated, according to Dr. Roberts and it’s best to get proper care within the first 24 hours to make sure anything that might be embedded in the wound is removed. He noted that research shows 10 percent of puncture wounds do result in serious infection, but such complications can be prevented with prompt and appropriate medical attention.

The depth and relative cleanliness of a puncture wound are the main factors determining possible infection risk, according to the ACFAS consumer Web site, FootPhysicians.com. “Studies show 60 percent of patients who required incision and drainage of a puncture wound had something embedded,” said Dr. Roberts. “With the increasing prevalence of



drug-resistant bacteria, even healthy people are getting staph infections. So if you step on something and the skin is broken, get treated right away,” he advised.

Proper treatment for puncture wounds involves thorough cleaning to decrease infection risk and tetanus shots often are needed. Following treatment, the wound should be monitored carefully at home.

“Sometimes an infection can develop later and migrate to the bones,” said Roberts. “So if the wound stays red, swollen and sore after a few days, go back to the doctor for further treatment. In all cases, a puncture wound on your foot should never be taken lightly.”

For further information about puncture wounds and other foot conditions and to locate a foot and ankle surgeon, visit www.FootPhysicians.com.