

Fit For Life

(NAPSA)—All seasons are the right ones for a vigorous walk or hike in the woods. Nature has many wonders to show us throughout the year. So, in order to give her your full attention while out on your next expedition, make sure that your feet stay comfortable and out of trouble.



It can be a hard road without proper fitting shoes and helpful athletic socks when you set out to enjoy nature on a hike.

Foot problems, especially hot spots and blisters, are easy to develop during a hike. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to keep your feet healthy through all your outdoor adventures, say experts at the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA):

1. Trim your toe nails straight across before beginning a hike.

2. Wear well-fitting boots designed for the environment you'll be in.

3. When shopping for boots, wear the socks you'll wear on the trail.

4. Break in your boots before going on long hikes.

5. Never walk around with laces untied.

6. Don't wear cotton socks. Opt for a wool- or acrylic-blend that wicks moisture away and keeps feet dry.

7. Take off your boots and socks and allow them to dry whenever possible.

8. Wear clean socks and change them often.

9. Apply moleskin at hot spots to absorb friction at the first sign of redness.

10. If a blister develops, pop it with a sterile pin or needle but do not remove the skin on top. Apply an antiseptic and cover with a bandage.

Always treat foot ailments immediately; with the help of a podiatrist, foot problems need not lead to serious complications. To learn more, call 1-800-FOOT-CARE or visit www.apma.org.