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Toenail Fungus Prevention Tips

Now that we have treated the fungal infection in your toenails, we don't want your toe fungus to come back. Here are a few tips to help ensure that your feet stay fungus-free!

Your Old Shoes:

If you have old shoes you've been wearing for a while, it is best to just discard them and buy new shoes to replace them. You may want to get an open-toed pair of shoes to alternate with a roomy pair of athletic shoes. Having shoes with plenty of room near the toes, made of a breathable material, helps ensure that your toes aren't crammed in where they might get damp or moist.

If you have some newer shoes you don't want to replace, you should spray the insides with Lysol, put them in a plastic bag, tie it shut, and let them sit overnight. After that, use anti-fungal spray in them on a fairly regular basis. If you are keeping the shoes, it would be a good idea to change out the insoles.

Your Old Socks:

Again, it is best to throw out the old socks you have and buy new socks. If you really want to keep your old socks, be sure to wash them in *very hot water*. (You may even want to boil them to kill any existing fungus.) It's best to avoid wool socks and tight hosiery, since they tend to absorb moisture. "Breathable" cotton socks that wick away moisture are your best option for maintaining dry feet. Even with "breathable" socks, it is best to wash them in very hot water, ideally with bleach.

Better Foot Hygiene:

- Wash your feet every day with soap and water. Dry them thoroughly, including between the toes.
- Keep your toenails short, trimmed straight across (do not curve the nail corners). You will also want to sterilize your nail clippers that you have been using.
- Use an anti-fungal spray or powder in your shoes and an anti-perspirant spray (or drying spray) on your feet to avoid excess sweat or moisture. You can even use regular *solid* deodorant sticks on your feet at night before bed (Mitchum brand "Smart Solid" is an excellent choice).
- Put your shoes in a ventilated area where they can dry out. Sports shoes stored in a locker cannot dry. If possible, change your shoes, socks, and hosiery more than once each day.
- Wash your shower with bleach weekly and frequently wash your shower mat in hot water. Wear flip-flops or some form of shoes in public pools, showers, and locker rooms. Never walk barefoot on a potentially contaminated floor.
- Choose a manicurist and pedicurist with meticulous sanitization procedures, and only agree to a nail treatment if they are going to use completely fresh water, as well as sterile instruments.

Take care of your feet. Keep them clean; keep them dry. We are destroying any fungus under your nails, so be sure to follow the tips above to help prevent future infection. A few simple actions and a few simple new habits can *greatly* improve your chances of remaining fungus-free for life!