

FOOT HYGIENE

Foot troubles are responsible for much of the fatigue and nervousness that plague the human race. Besides producing a good deal of misery they cause a serious economic loss.

Foot troubles may arise from a number of causes; ill-fitting and too high or too low-heeled shoes; poor posture; improper habits of walking or standing; injuries of various kinds. Concrete and asphalt footpaths and streets are also factors in producing these troubles.

The feet have a very important part to play as they carry the weight of the body and protect it from jarring. The foot bones are held together by ligaments, by tendons from the strong muscles in the leg and by the small muscles in the foot itself. The bones most important for standing and for walking are arranged in two arches which act like springs in the feet.

One arch extends from the heel to the ball of the foot and the other extends from side to side across the foot. As we walk the bones in the arches are pressed closer together and then spread apart again, as our feet are flexed and the weight of the body is transferred from one foot to the other.

With perfect arches we have the spring and elasticity nature intended us to have. With the arches down we have flat feet and their attendant ills. Nature has provided the arches of the feet, the cushions in the knee joints and the cushions also between the bones of the spine to give spring and elasticity. If the arches fail an extra burden is thrown on to the knees. If they are unable to accept this increased load the headaches, backache and irritability associated with spinal disorders are experienced.

Simple exercises such as walking on the outside of the foot, and rising on the toes will develop the muscles that hold the arch. Picking up small objects with the toes, and curling the toes over the edge of a book will also be found helpful. Arch supports should only be used as a last resort and then only at the advice of your doctor.

Like all other external parts of the body the feet should be bathed once a day. Always wash and dry thoroughly between the toes, and wear clean socks or stockings each day.

A common infection of the foot is that known as tinea or athlete's foot. This is caused by a fungus. It occurs usually among young adults and people whose feet perspire freely. In mild cases there is a soft whitish skin between the toes, often with cracks. In severe cases small blisters, raw areas and scaly patches may occur.

Tinea is more likely to occur in damp conditions and is usually caught from bare floors of swimming pools and other places where people walk barefooted.

If your feet perspire a great deal use a drying powder on them, especially between the toes. Ten per cent. boric acid in talcum powder is satisfactory. Wash your feet night and morning and apply the powder.

Ingrowing toenails dig into the flesh on one or both sides of the toe. Faulty cutting of the toe nails and tight fitting shoes may cause this trouble. In cutting the toe nails trim straight across.



Some of Our Folk



**Shirley Binge and Jimmy French,
of Moree**



A bevy of pretty country girls