

gerontology
A. Jolayne
Farrell

Elderly must care for feet

Dear Joe:
Would you please address the subject of foot care (for seniors) in your column.
Mrs. D.G., Detroit reader
Dear Mrs. G.:
Care for the feet is essential for all of us at any age. Feet carry us thousands of miles in a lifetime and take a great deal of abuse.
Much of the abuse is due to the fact that we rarely take the time to take special care of our feet. The older we get, the more important foot care becomes.
Good foot care includes the selection of proper fitting shoes, ongoing and good "hands on" care of the feet and an awareness of certain symptoms that require professional help.
WHEN SELECTING shoes, anyone over age 55 should consider the following:
• Shop for shoes at the end of the day. Feet have a tendency to swell late in the day.
• Select shoes broad and high enough, so that there is no squeezing or rubbing.
• Wear new shoes for only a few hours each day until they are nicely "broken in."
• Consider purchasing shoes that are custom made if fit is a serious problem.
GOOD CARE of the feet includes:
Washing the feet daily in warm (not hot) water. Avoid soaking the feet for more than 10 minutes as this can cause dryness.
Drying the feet gently, making sure that the area between the toes is dry.
Inspecting the feet daily for blisters, cuts, cracks and swelling.
Avoiding use of pumice or commercial products on corns and calluses.
Using nail clippers or nail scissors when cutting toenails (nails are softer and easier to cut immediately after bathing).
Cutting or filing toenails straight across; avoid cutting a "V" in the front of the nail.
Consulting a professional in foot care (doctor, podiatrist or chiropodist) for treatment of thick, cracked or ingrown toenails.

SYMPTOMS THAT require immediate medical attention are:
A change in the color of the lower leg (blue or black) reflecting a problem with circulation.
An injury that doesn't heal or becomes infected.
Pain when walking that is relieved by rest.
Reduced sensation to pain or changes in temperature.
A sensation of pins and needles in the feet or hands.
A sensation of walking on cotton balls.
An unusual coldness, cramping, numbness, tingling or discomfort in the feet.
Lastly, it's important not to risk anything that can decrease the circulation to the feet such as smoking or wearing circular garters or tight socks.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENTAL characteristics suggest types of toys suitable for children at different ages:
• Birth-18 months — Toys should be brightly colored, lightweight, varied textures. Toys should be washable, colorfast and too big to swallow. There should be no rough edges or sharp corners.
• 18 months-3 years — The toddler needs things to ride and climb on and stack up. This age likes pretending "grown-up" with dishes, clothes, stuffed animals and dolls.

Q. Help! Before I make my annual trip to the toy store, I need some tips for buying toys. With so many choices, I'm overwhelmed and confused.

A. Play is natural to all kids. It's the way they learn about the world around them.
Play isn't "just playing" to kids — it's learning. Properly chosen toys can aid your child's mental, emotional, social and physical development.
Since every child has unique interests and abilities and establishes favorite kinds of play at an early age, the best way to choose toys for particular children is by watching and asking what they like.



Terry Gibb

• 3-6 years — Pretend is still important. Costume and equipment are stimulating. Backyard gym sets, bigger tricycles or two-wheelers help coordination. Coloring books, paints, wooden puzzles, picture books and records stimulate the mind and develop coordination. Coloring books, paints, wooden puzzles, picture books and records stimulate the mind and develop coordination.
• 6-9 years — Games gain increasing popularity as well as "Barbie"-type dolls, doll accessories,

electric train or race car sets. Individual play-books, puzzles, toy typewriters, easy craft kits become as frequent as group activities. Sports equipment, both for boys and girls, is very popular.
• 9-12 years — Hobbies are usually started during this period. Team sports are equally important. Board games involving strategy and decisions are popular. Individual sports may gain interest at this age.

SAFETY TIPS:
• Choose toys with care. Use printed ages on toys as a guideline.
• Look for quality design and construction.
• Make sure all directions and instructions are clear to the child. Discard plastic wrapping from toys immediately.
• Read labels for safety warnings, such as non-toxic on painted toys; flame retardant/resistant on fabric toys; washable on stuffed toys; washable on stuffed animals and dolls.
• Check all toys periodically for breakage and potential hazards. Repair or throw away broken toys at once.
• Teach children to put their toys away safely in the proper place to avoid falls and other injuries.

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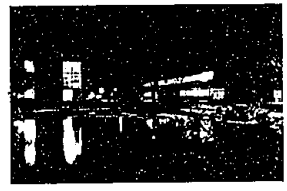
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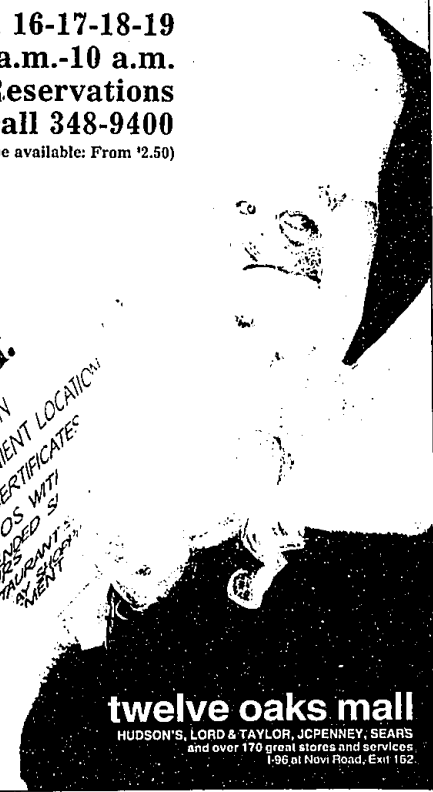
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