



Beauchamp  
Foot Care



*Top 10  
Causes of*  
**Toenail  
Fungus**



# Top 10 Causes of Toenail Fungus

*Toenail fungus is a common fungal infection that affects approximately 3 - 9 per cent of the adult population in the UK, which is about 5 million people according to [The National Health Service](#). With a problem affecting the everyday lives of so many people, it's important to know the causes of toenail fungus and how to properly avoid it. If you think you or someone close to you has this condition, take a moment to educate yourself about the top 10 causes of toenail fungus below.*



## 1. Damage to the toenail

If your toenail has cracking or separation from the nail bed, even tiny in size, it allows microscopic spores in the environment to enter and start the infection that leads to toenail fungus. This kind of damage to the toenail is often prominent among athletes or people who exercise excessively.



*Tip: Give your toenail time to heal by protecting it with bandages and wearing shoes that completely enclose the foot. If the cracking or separation is painful and unable to heal on its own you should visit a podiatrist.*

## 2. Living or working in hot, humid conditions

This provides the ideal environment for toenail fungus to grow. Occupations that require you to constantly wear boots, like construction workers, or living in places that have a high rate of humidity put you at greater risk of contracting toenail fungus.

*Tip: Be sure to air out your shoes, wear natural cotton, silk or woolen socks that absorb moisture, keep your feet clean, and allow your feet to breathe each day. You could also consider investing in a product like the [SteriShoe®](#) sanitiser, which provides a healthier environment for your feet by sanitising the inside of your shoes.*

### 3. Poor foot hygiene

Not washing your feet every day, going barefoot in public places, not drying your feet completely after showering, and sharing pedicure tools, are common causes of toenail fungus.

*Tip: Practice good foot hygiene by washing your feet with soap and water at the end of each day. Air out your shoes each day and put on a clean pair of socks each morning. When you're in public places like swimming pools or changing rooms wear sandals, and don't share towels or pedicure tools. Keep your toenails trimmed and filed and even consider using an antifungal spray or powder.*



### 4. A Weakened immune system

Toenail fungus can sometimes be caused by certain diseases or their treatments. For example like diabetes, or cancer that is being treated with radiation or chemotherapy, which makes it difficult for your body to fight off the fungal infection.

*Tip: Maintain a well-balanced diet rich in minerals and vitamins. Avoid too much sugar because this can actually feed the fungus.*

## 5. Genetics

You are more vulnerable to attracting toenail fungus if one of your parents has had it, and you could increase the chance of your children getting it too.

*Tip: Since toenail fungus is hereditary there isn't much you can do except practice good preventive measures and visit a podiatrist early on if you think you have toenail fungus to find out your treatment options.*



## 6. Wearing the same shoes every day

Wearing the same shoes every day without airing them traps the sweat and heat and doesn't allow your feet to breathe. Toenail fungus loves to grow in a hot, moist environment. Consistently wearing the same footwear also puts constant pressure on the same areas of your feet every day which can lead to other foot problems.

*Tip: Wear different types of shoes to help distribute the pressure on your feet, as well as giving your feet a chance to rest and breathe.*

## 7. Type of footwear

The type of footwear you choose each day can help or hinder the growth of toenail fungus. Shoes or boots that are fully enclosed don't allow the feet to breathe and can promote the growth of fungus by providing a moist environment where fungus grows best. On the other hand, sandals make your feet more susceptible to germs and contracting toenail fungus, especially if you have a cut or damage to the toenail.



*Tip: Do the best you can to maintain a good balance when it comes to footwear. Wear breathable footwear when you can, especially in warm weather, and wear shoes that protect your feet when participating in activities that provide wear and tear on your feet, or when you are healing from damage to the toenail.*



## 8. Activities that cause wear and tear

Activities such as running, football, excessive exercise, or other types of sports are often causes of toenail fungus because they could lead to a ruptured nail plate. Since these types of activities also cause your feet to perspire, the moisture gets trapped in the nail cracks, inviting the fungus in.

*Tip: Take proper care of your feet by bandaging any cracks or cuts, washing your feet with antibacterial soap, and allowing them to breathe. Also make sure that you are wearing properly fitting footwear for the type of activity you are participating in.*

## 9. Practices that cause cross contamination at nail salons

If someone with toenail fungus got a pedicure before you, then unsterilised equipment or unsanitary practices such as using the same tools on multiple customers or not properly cleaning the pedicure basin, can easily lead to you contracting toenail fungus.

*Tip: Before beginning your pedicure, ask if the tools have been cleaned and sterilised. You could even bring in your own set of tools so you're absolutely sure they are clean.*



## 10. Poor circulation

Poor circulation, often caused by issues like Diabetes, is a contributing factor of toenail fungus because the restriction in blood flow causes the nail to lose valuable nutrition making it weak and more susceptible.

*Tip: Do the best you can to eat a well-balanced diet and practice good nutrition. Make sure you are getting plenty of vitamins and minerals, and following your doctor's orders.*





*These common causes of toenail fungus can often be avoided by making good preventative decisions. We hope you found this information helpful and will be on your way to beautiful, healthy feet. If you think you already have toenail fungus please visit our [Symptoms](#) page to learn more or our [Treatments](#) page to see the options available to you. We also invite you to contact Beauchamp Foot Care for an [initial consultation](#).*

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