

# Foot Care for Foot Health: Plan Handout

Disclaimer: stop if you feel any pain or discomfort while performing the exercises or stretches.

Plan (as described by Omote et al., 2017):

1. **Strengthen muscles** that activate plantar intrinsic muscles at least 5 days a week:
  - Short-foot exercise
  - Toes-spread-out exercise
  - First-toe-extension exercise
  - Second- to fifth-toe-extension exercise (Gooding et al., 2016)
2. **Increase flexibility** of foot and lower leg muscles through stretching and massage
3. Perform daily **foot hygiene**
4. Perform **safe nail clipping** techniques
5. **Examine feet** daily for skin integrity issues
6. Evaluate **appropriate footwear**

---

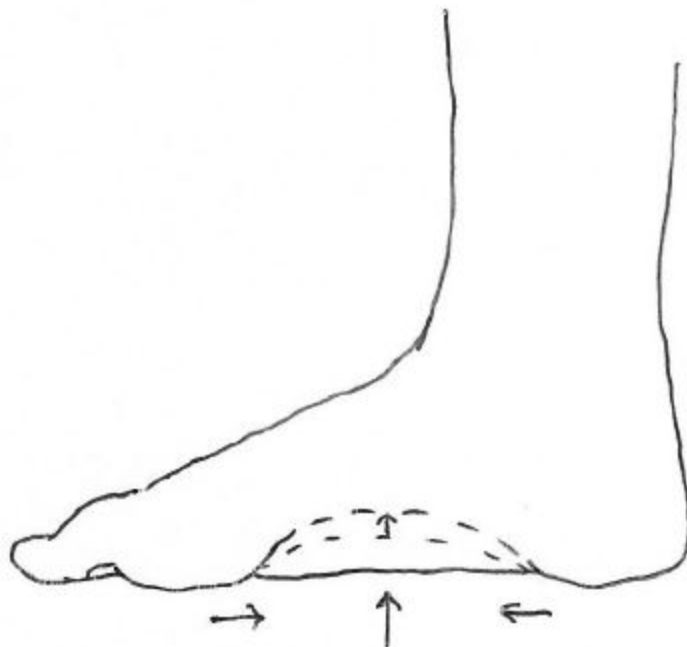
1a. Plan: **Strengthen muscles** that activate plantar intrinsic muscles at least 5 days a week, cont.

Actions: **Short-foot exercise**

Placement: Sit or stand, Lift then drop toes, keep inactive  
--Lift your arch --  
Pull metatarsal towards heel

Hold for 10 seconds, rest 1-2,  
Repeat 5 times  
Perform several times per day

Improvement in 2-6 weeks  
Jam (2006)



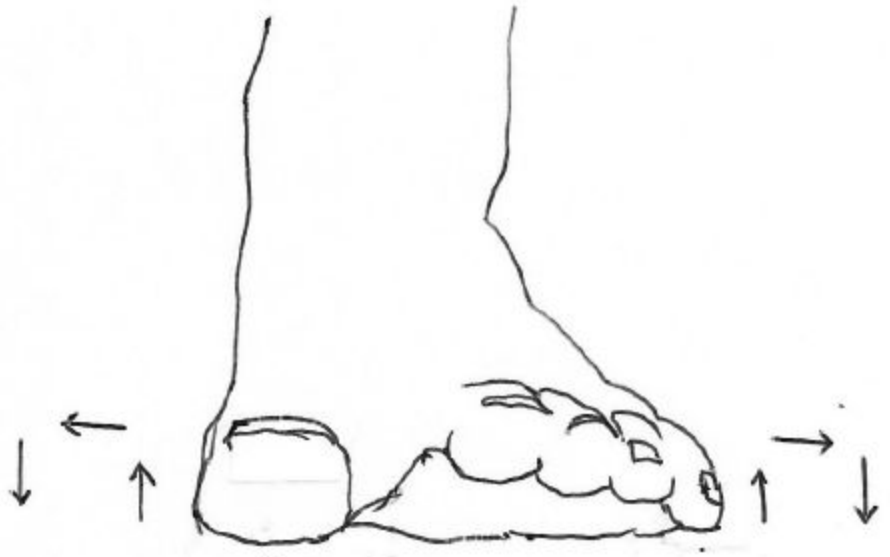
## Foot Care for Foot Health: Plan Handout

1b. Plan: **Strengthen muscles** that activate plantar intrinsic muscles at least 5 days a week, cont.

Actions: **Toes spread-out exercise**

Lift and spread all toes  
Place 1st and 5th toes to the ground  
Relax toes 2, 3, 4

Hold for 10 seconds, rest 1-2,  
Repeat 5 times  
Perform once per day



---

1c. Plan: **Strengthen muscles** that activate plantar intrinsic muscles at least 5 days a week, cont.

Actions: **First-toe-extension exercise**

Lift 1st toe  
Leave toes 2, 3, 4, 5 to the floor

Hold for 10 seconds, rest 1-2,  
Repeat 5 times  
Perform once per day



## Foot Care for Foot Health: Plan Handout

1.d Plan: **Strengthen muscles** that activate plantar intrinsic muscles at least 5 days a week, cont.

Actions: **Second- to fifth-toe-extension exercise**

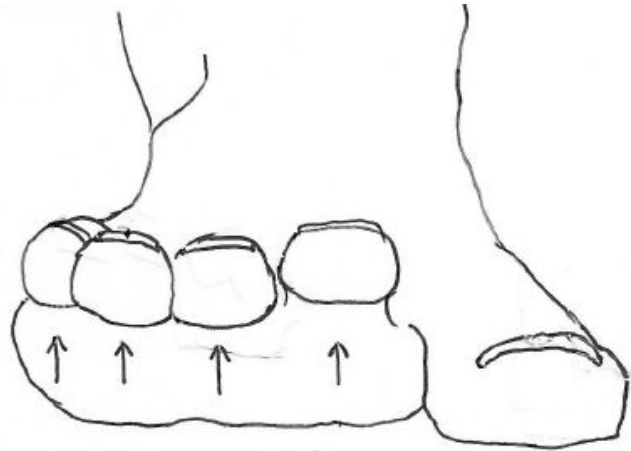
Lift toes 2, 3, 4, 5

Leave 1st toe on the floor

Hold for 10 seconds, rest 1-2,

Repeat 5 times

Perform once per day



---

2. Plan: **Increase flexibility of foot and lower leg muscles through stretching and massage**

Stretches: barefoot, on a soft surface, hold for 15-30 seconds

**Passive Toe Spread:** while sitting, use the friction of the floor to spread your toes.

**Dorsal/Shin Stretch:** while sitting, point your toes and place the top of your foot on a padded surface on the floor, slowly stretch the top of your foot.

**Plantar/Calf Stretch:** while standing, maintain weight on foot not being stretched, hold onto a stable object, place your foot against a vertical object and slightly lean forward.

**Massage:** after foot hygiene with application of lotion

- Heel
- Sole
- Toes

## Foot Care for Foot Health: Plan Handout

### 3. Plan: **Perform foot hygiene**

**Avoid soaking** feet because:

- it can cause skin maceration, which can lead to skin breakdown
- it increases the chance of infection

Use **mildly acidic soap** to match the pH balance of the skin (5.4-5.9 pH)

Use a washcloth to **exfoliate dead skin**

Thoroughly **rinse and dry, especially between your toes**

Use **mildly acidic lotion** to match the pH balance of the skin (5.4-5.9 pH)

Avoid putting lotion between toes

Remove lotion that gets in between your toes

Mildly acidic brands: Aveno, Cerave, Cetaphil, Eucerin

---

### 4. Plan: **Perform safe nail clipping techniques**

Follow the free edge corner to corner

- Avoid creating “devil horns”

Protect the hyponychium and cuticle from injury

- Don't cut too close
- Don't push your cuticles too far back

Consider regular filing if you can't grip clippers

---

### 5. Plan: **Examine feet for skin integrity issues**

In between toes

Fronts of toes

Toe joints

Soles of feet

Places where your shoes rub

Examine daily for feet with minimal sensation

Examine inside of your shoes before putting them on

# Foot Care for Foot Health: Plan Handout

## 6. Plan: **Evaluate appropriate footwear**

### Features:

- Breathable
- Close-toe shoes to avoid injury
- Secure heel
- Minimal heel elevation
- Proper length and width
  - Sock liner/insole test: take out the insole and place your weight bearing foot on top OR
  - Make a line tracing of your weight bearing foot and compare to your shoe.
    - If your foot overlaps, you need wider/longer shoes.
- Buy shoes at the end of the day when your feet are the largest.
- Rotate your shoes to ensure adequate drying.
- Wear fresh, breathable socks/hosiery every day.

Questions or Comments, please contact:

Kristen Ritchie, RN, CFCN, CNE

Cape Cod Foot Care, LLC

tel/text: 508-348-9128

[capecodfootcare@gmail.com](mailto:capecodfootcare@gmail.com)

[www.capecodfootcare.com](http://www.capecodfootcare.com)

### References

Doughty, D. B. & McNichol, L. L. (Eds.). (2016). *Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society® Core Curriculum: Wound Management*. Philadelphia, PA: Wolters Kluwer.

Gooding, T. M., Feger, M. A., Hart, J. M., & Hertel, J. (2016). Intrinsic Foot Muscle Activation During Specific Exercises: A T2 Time Magnetic Resonance Imaging Study. *Journal of athletic training*, 51(8), 644–650. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5094843/>

Jam, B. (2006). *Evaluation and retraining of the intrinsic foot muscles for pain syndromes related to abnormal control of pronation*. Posturology Web site. Retrieved from [http://posturology.nl/fileadmin/user\\_upload/IntrinsicMuscles\\_Pain\\_Syndromes.pdf](http://posturology.nl/fileadmin/user_upload/IntrinsicMuscles_Pain_Syndromes.pdf). Accessed June 10, 2015.

Omote, S., Watanabe, A., Hiramatsu, T., Saito, E., Yokogawa, M., Okamoto, R., Sakakibara, C., Ichimori, A., Kyota, K., & Tsukasaki, K. (2017). A foot-care program to facilitate self-care by the elderly: a non-randomized intervention study. *BMC Research Notes*, 10(1), 586. doi:10.1186/s13104-017-2898-9. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5679143/>