

SPECIAL FOCUS

CANCER FAQ



Every year in May the World Foot Health Awareness Month is launched by the International Federation of Podiatrists – Fédération Internationale des Podologues to increase the awareness of the importance of foot health among the general public and other health professionals. The FAQ is created for patients, talk to your podiatrist for more information on the subject. Responsible publisher, Carine Haemels President FIP-IFP, 57 rue Eugène Carrière, 75018 Paris, France. www.fip-ifp.org

CAN CANCER AFFECT MY FEET?

Cancer can develop anywhere on the body, including the lower extremities. It can cross gender and throughout all age ranges. For example, skin cancer such as malignant melanoma, bone or soft tissue cancer can present in the lower extremities.

WHAT IS MY PODIATRISTS' ROLE IN CANCER CARE?

As an integral member of the health care team, podiatrists are often called upon to be on the cusp of important diagnoses for the patients. This can also include pedal manifestations of cancer within the podiatric practice. A first line defense and cooperative integration with the broader health care teams will be

DO I NEED TO PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO MY FEET WHEN RECEIVING A CANCER TREATMENT?

Cancer treatments can confront a patient with undesirable secondary effects. Each drug or treatment has different side effects; some will disappear after the treatment is over, but others may remain. Cancer treatment modalities can create problems with hands and feet.

WHAT IS THE HAND-FOOT SYNDROME I'VE HEARD ABOUT?

Hand-Foot Syndrome is sometimes a side effect of chemotherapy. It mainly affects the palms and soles and causes redness of the skin, swelling, and pain on the palms of the hands and/or the soles of the feet.

WHEN DO I NEED TO TALK WITH MY PODIATRIST ABOUT THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms like those listed below may be signs of therapy induced hand-foot syndrome and advice may be needed. When you experience any of the following symptoms while undergoing a cancer treatment, you should seek advice from your health care team:

- Hyperkeratosis or the thickening of the outer layer of the skin
- Redness of the skin
- Swelling, can cause unguis incarnatus, ingrown toenail
- Tenderness
- Blisters
- Sensations in the feet such as a burning or tingling
- Calluses mainly on the plantar supporting points
- Cracked skin
- Flaking of the skin
- Peeling skin
- Hyaline/glassy, fragile skin
- Severe pain and/or difficulty in walking