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REAL MEN TAKE CARE OF THEIR FEET

Try to talk to men about their feet and watch them squirm. Not necessarily because they're ticklish – but because they're self-conscious.

Men somehow have the idea that attending to the health and appearance of the skin and nails on their feet isn't all that masculine. But it's important, especially in summer, when going barefoot, wearing shoes without socks and wearing sandals means more wear and tear – and more exposure around other people.

“A lot of guys won't even talk about taking care of their feet. They're totally in the dark about how much better their feet will look and feel, and they don't have a clue how much the women in their lives will appreciate it,” says Robert Weinberg, owner of the Robert Lawrence Men's Salon in Edgewater, NJ. “They hear the word ‘pedicure’ and envision themselves having to enter a women's establishment for a ‘girly’ treatment, and that's the end of it.”

But there are some things you can do in the privacy of your own home, however, to make your feet more comfortable and fit for public display.

Go to your local pharmacy and pick up a tube of heavy-duty foot cream and a foot file (or pumice stone). In the shower every day, rub the bottoms and sides of your feet with the foot file, then wash and rinse thoroughly. Apply the foot cream to dry skin. It'll help to soften skin on contact.

To avoid ingrown nails and to keep nails looking good and not hurting the one you love, use a nail clipper to cut nails straight across, on a regular basis.

“While at-home maintenance is better than no maintenance at all, most men don't know what they're missing by not getting a professional pedicure – as long as they go to a men's salon,” says Weinberg. “Introduce a guy to a men's salon, and he usually gets hooked for life.”

Men's salons offer a wide range of products and services for men only, in a distinctly male atmosphere that feels more like a lounge or club than a salon. Amenities like HDTV's and Internet access allow patrons to relax or be as productive as they wish.

But remember, whether you choose the services of a professional or take the do-it-yourself road, take care of your feet – and they'll take care of you.

The Robert Lawrence Salon is located at 725 River Road, Edgewater. Go to www.robertlawrencesalon.com for more information.