

For further information please contact:

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Complaints / PALS Information

Whether you want to complain, enquire or simply talk to someone about your concerns, we are here to help and support you.

North Somerset Community Partnership Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) Office can be contacted at:

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)
North Somerset Community Partnership
Castlewood POX Box 237
Tickenham Road
Clevedon
North Somerset
BS21 9AX

Freephone: [0800 389 5260](tel:08003895260)

Email: nscp.pals@nsomersetcp-cic.nhs.uk

If you require this leaflet in large print, braille, audio format or in another language please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service. (PALS) Please contact us on the freephone number or email address above. We are pleased to offer a telephone interpreting service. For further details on how to access this service, please contact PALS using the details above.

Patient information leaflets are available for all services provided by North Somerset Community Partnership. Please ask your health care professional. North Somerset Community Partnership is committed to Equality and Diversity for both staff and those who use our services.



Updated Mar 2014



Taking Care of your Feet

A guide to Chilblains

Department of Podiatric Medicine



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What are Chilblains?

Chilblains are small, sometimes itchy, red or purple areas on the skin which can be painful. They often occur on small fingers or toes where the feet are exposed to pressure from footwear.

What causes them?

Chilblains are caused by the skin's reaction to cold, with damp and draughty conditions being contributory factors.

If the skin on the extremities is chilled and is then followed by too rapid warming next to a fire or hot water bottle chilblains can result.

Who is at risk?

The very young and elderly who have poor circulation are more likely to get chilblains as well as those who have poor diet or do not wear enough warm clothing.



What are the symptoms?

Those who are susceptible may experience burning or itching on their hands and feet after exposure to cold. These symptoms will be worse when entering a warmer area.

The surface of the skin may eventually split causing broken chilblains.

What to do if you have Chilblains?

- Soothing lotions such as calamine or witch hazel will reduce the burning sensation
- If a broken chilblain has occurred a sterile dressing will be required
- Do not scratch chilblains as this can lead to infection
- Your local Pharmacist can advise you on what medications are most suitable.

How to prevent Chilblains

- Keep yourself warm by wearing trousers rather than a skirt and several thin layers of clothing rather than one thick layer
- Thick soled shoes or thermal insoles will protect your feet from the cold ground, but do remember to allow enough room for thicker stockings or socks
- Avoid any tight clothing that may constrict the circulation
- Keep your house warm and do remember to warm your bed before climbing in at night
- Keep your shoes at warm room temperature, not in a cold porch or outhouse
- Have a hot meal during the day to warm your whole body up
- Keep exposure to cold to a minimum and always ensure that your feet are warmed slowly, not by using a hot water bottle or sitting close to the fire
- If you are susceptible, use a good chilblain cream to ward off chilblains (see your local Pharmacist)
- Avoid wearing garters/tight hold up stockings/socks
- Always seek advice from a trained Health Care Professional e.g. Podiatrist, GP, Practice Nurse or Pharmacist.

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