
Trench foot or immersion foot

What is trench foot?

Trench foot, also known as immersion foot, occurs when the feet are wet for long periods of time. It can be quite painful, but it can be prevented and treated.

What are the symptoms of trench foot?

Symptoms of trench foot include a tingling and/or itching sensation, pain, swelling, cold and blotchy skin, numbness, and a prickly or heavy feeling in the foot. The foot may be red, dry, and painful after it becomes warm. Blisters may form, followed by skin and tissue dying and falling off. In severe cases, untreated trench foot can involve the toes, heel, or entire foot.

How is trench foot prevented and treated?

When possible, air-dry and elevate your feet, and exchange wet shoes and socks for dry ones to help prevent the development of trench foot.

Treatment for trench foot is similar to the treatment for frostbite. Take the following steps:

- Thoroughly clean and dry your feet.
- Put on clean, dry socks daily.
- Treat the affected part by applying warm packs or soaking in warm water (102° to 110° F) for approximately 5 minutes.
- When sleeping or resting, do not wear socks.
- Obtain medical assistance as soon as possible.

If you have a foot wound, your foot may be more prone to infection. Check your feet at least once a day for infections or worsening of symptoms.

**All information from the Centers for Disease Control as of 4/6/09