

## Feet Dossier

It is already fashion in the US: almost totally redone feet, collagen pads implanted under the sole in order to wear very high heels, filing of the lateral bones to wear shoes with very fine points.. operations that sometimes leave remainder problems and pain! In Italy, luckily, foot is still seen not as an aesthetic emblem, ma especially as "accessory" to the well being of the whole body. Walk comfortably and with suitable shoes is, in fact, a must for men and women, and this whole thing is noticed especially during the summer, when feet are obviously shown.

### **A FUNDAMENTAL POINT FOR OUR WELL-BEING**

Many of you do not know that neglecting the well-being and health of your feet can have negative repercussions both for your posture and veins.

Doctor Alessandra Sassu, aesthetic doctor from Cagliari, explains: "Correcting the sole support, the asymmetries of the pelvis or shoulders, painful symptomatology of the cervical and lumbar column, apparently non resolvable chronic headaches and dental malocclusions can be treated. And also osseous deformations, trophic alterations of skin and nails, hyperkeratotic areas, edemas of the back of the foot and fingers... An apparently healthy foot when motionless can function badly during the walking: this determines venous alterations responsible for varicose diseases. And also... a chronic lymphedema (that is so say the swelling of leg, back of foot and fingers) which does not respond to the common therapies that act in the lymphatic system, can be caused by onychomycosis (fingers' mycosis). In these cases the whole thing will not be resolved till an antimonic pharmacological therapy is taken orally".

Different aesthetic pathologies, as some types of the so-called "cellulite", need combined therapies among the ones based on the correction of the altered sole support.

Doctor Sassu still explains: "Through the anamnesis, the objective exam and the use of the instrumentally methods that evaluate the correct position of the foot when it is motionless and in movement, the doctor can prescribe a specific sole that contributes to the resolution of the pathology presented by the patient".

In all these circumstances, however, the collaboration between the different specialists (podiatrist, angiologist, orthopedic, aesthetic doctor) plays an important role.

### **WHEN THE AESTHETIC FACTOR IS BASIC**

What about a healthy foot, but neglected from an aesthetic point of view?

"It should be a regular habit – Alessandra Sassu says – to get an appointment with a prepared beautician who has the capacity to solve problems responsible for indisposition in wearing shoes, and sensations of pain during the walking (for example callosity, soft corns, ingrowing nails...). And also, a non treated foot is sign of negligence and untidiness".

So feel free to use scrubs with salts that give back a smooth skin, hydrating and nutrient lotions for an ultra smooth epidermis, and masks with paraffin for a shiny and soothed down skin.

Nails will have to be perfectly filed and modeled. And we can not forget that fashion imposes a squared shape for the summer 2004!

Doctor Sussu adds: "For who is not lucky to have good looking nails can have recourse to special treatments that allow the reconstruction: tips (faked nails to apply and glue on own base), shiny and clear gels, resins that harden and have a very natural aspect. On nails (reconstructed or natural) nails polishes and

decorations with strass and little pearls with different shape and color can be applied or you can have the French manicure done, coloring in white for the classical version or in different colors if you want to exaggerate only the part free from the nail!"

So feel free, enjoy yourself and concluding do not forget to ask your beautician a feet massage with essential oils.. you will feel at the top of the world!!!

## **LET US CALL UPON THE PLASTIC SURGEON**

Plastic surgery can do a lot to improve the well-being of our feet and to adjust small and big problems at the level of the extremities. Doctor Raffaella Sommariva, plastic surgeon from Genova, explains: "One of the problems that can appear is the syndactyly, a congenital malformation of the foot's fingers that are shown united in groups of two or three. In these cases the plastic surgeon operates by himself if the problem is at the level of soft tissues, or with the help of the orthopedic if the osseous apparatus is involved". Opposite problem is the polydactyly that is to say when the fingers of the foot are more than usual. Also in this case the plastic surgeon operates eliminating the fingers and restoring the correct shape of the foot. In these cases is always fundamental to rest after the operation with the limbs "in discharge" for a variable duration according to the type of operation.

There are less complicated problems, in a certain way, that always require surgical operation. "We operate in case of mycosis of rebel fingers with topical and systematic treatments – doctor Sommariva still explains – or in case of relapsed ingrowing nails. In these cases the surgeon takes away not the whole nail, but only a part of it, together with the matrix wedged in the soft tissues, then accelerating the recovery so that the growth of the nail is not necessary. The plastic surgeon uproots also the sole warts that can be very irritating if they grow on the foot sole and develop in deepness. These are simple operations to execute with local anesthesia and with a minimum discomfort for the patient.

## **CALL ON THE VASCULAR SURGEON**

"Feet receive signals and sollicitations from the inside of the body, because they are the most declivous and "used" part of the human body – doctor Alessio Redaelli, vascular surgeon from Milan, underlines – and their health and well-being should be always a priority for each one of us. If we realize that at the end of the day our feet are swollen, there is something that does not work in our lifestyle or, more rarely, we are in presence of a true pathology".

So, what do we have to do now? Doctor Redaelli replies: "We can help our feet in many ways, bur first of all if we can, we have to improve our lifestyle. There are general rules for each one of us that should be good to follow such as rising the feet of our bed (with two bricks for example) of about 5 or 10 centimeters, so that feet will be over elevated compared with the rest of our body. Then if you have a sedentary job, you stand up or sit down for too many hours, remember to walk at least half an hour per day. And if our working day life make us to stand up motionless (maybe you are an ironer or a surgeon) it is good to stand on your fingers' tips sometimes, but with regularity, to promote the circulation of blood".

And shoes? "Never abuse with excessively high shoes – Alessio Redaelli underlines – or shoes with very fine points. They can also limit the circulation of blood and provoke inconvenient by the time goes by. Also the hold-up socks, that tighten excessively the legs, or socks with too tight elastic need to be worn with parsimony. Tights and socks with graduated compression are better. You can buy them in specialized orthopedics shops or pharmacy, where people will be able to advice you for your right size and unite health and aesthetic".

And sport? "It is a great friend – the vascular surgeon goes on – very useful to prevent phenomena linked to bad bloody circulation. Besides the movement and walking a lot of sports are great, among the ones swimming",

When all these pieces of advice are not enough and legs remain a little bit swollen especially at night, good manual massages, as lymphodrain and press therapy, can be good.

But which ones are the vascular pathologies that can affect our feet?

Doctor Redaelli explains: "First of all varices (they are dilated veins, noticeable under the skin both for their "sneaky" shape and to be noticed as a string...) that can reach different stages of inflammation and, in the most serious cases, provoke also ulcers. A big help, in these past years, was given by the echocolour Doppler that allows a very precise, repeatable and absolutely harmless also in pregnancy diagnosis!

In case of varices if a clear circulatory insufficiency is underlined, we can operate first with pharmacological treatments based on phlebotonics that have to be taken periodically, second, according to the indications, with surgical operation that foresees the removal of the "ill" vein with the help of micro incisions, or with sclerotherapy. The operation, in most cases, is simple and can be outpatientially executed with a local anesthesia".

And in the end, always in the vascular field, an important advice dedicated to who suffers from varices. It can happen that for a trauma or any other reason, a little vein (for example in the ankle) start to bleed: what do you have to do? Here there is what the expert suggests:

1: do not panic!

2: lay down and raise your legs above the chest.

3: press the bleeding point with a finger for 2 or 3 minutes. Blood will stop to come out almost immediately and, after a while, you can calmly go to your own doctor who will take care of the case.