

Cracked Heels



What are they?

Cracking or splitting in the skin which most often occurs around the heels.

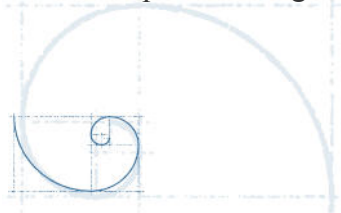
What causes them?

When the skin around the heel becomes dry, it loses its suppleness and elasticity, and often begins to split.

This condition is commonly associated with heel callous (build-up of dead skin). The cracks in the heel can become quite painful depending on their severity, and may bleed and become infected.

Cracked heels often occur when wearing a particular type of footwear, such as thongs, sling or open backed sandals, or bare feet. The skin around the heel is exposed and allows callous and dry skin formation. The sole of the shoe can contribute to callous formation.

Cracked heels are a common complaint during the warmer summer months.



How are they treated?

- See your Podiatrist to have the heel callous removed. Regular treatment is recommended to identify and prevent potential problems.
- Your Podiatrist will recommend a moisturizer to be used on a daily basis. E.g. Sorbolene cream.
- An antiseptic liquid (e.g. Betadine) may be required if the cracks are deep or infected.
- Appropriate footwear should be worn. Avoid the prolonged use of thongs or bare feet, and wear sandals with enclosed heels where possible. Wear stockings or socks when possible.
- Adequate water intake and essential fatty acids within your diet (e.g. Omega 3 fatty acids) may assist in preventing dryness and cracking by helping to keep the skin hydrated.
- Referral to other health professionals may be necessary where this condition is caused by nutritional or other medical disorders.