



6 Physical Warning Signs No Woman Should Ignore

The female body goes through a lot of changes throughout her lifetime, so it is natural to expect some new developments. While most women do not worry over every little symptom, there are some that should not be ignored. Any unusual symptom that persists without reason should be checked out as it may be a sign of something more serious. Here are six unexpected symptoms women should pay attention to if they keep occurring.

Unexplained Excessive Weight Loss

Most women are not likely to complain about weight loss, but when it happens unexpectedly or without effort, it could be problematic. One of the first signs of cancer is an unexpected weight loss of ten pounds or more. Other conditions associated with unexplained weight loss are Crohn's disease and type one diabetes. Bring it up with a doctor if ten or more pounds were lost within six to twelve

months, even if no other symptoms are present.

Nocturnal Diarrhea

Diarrhea at any time of the day is unwelcome, but it is especially annoying at night when rest is needed. Anyone suffering from diarrhea during the middle of the night may have just eaten something bad, or it could be a sign of something more serious, such as irritable bowel disease. Nocturnal diarrhea is especially concerning because the intestines should be calm. Seek treatment if the condition occurs for more than several nights in a row as this may be a sign of ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease.

Dizziness Upon Standing Up

Everyone has experienced dizziness unstanding up too quickly every once and awhile. But if the problem is reoccurring, it is worth checking out as this may be a sign of a serious medical condition such as orthostatic hypotension, which occurs when the

body is having trouble controlling its blood pressure levels. Dizziness upon standing could also be triggered by certain medications, such as antidepressants and high blood pressure medication. Iron-deficient anemia and dehydration can also bring on a dizzy spell.

Vision Changes

Vision changes tend to come on slowly, which makes them easy to overlook. If cell phones or computer screens suddenly become harder to read, it might be time to see the eye doctor. Vision loss may also be a symptom of a more serious condition. Sudden, painless loss of vision is a common symptom of a stroke. Pay attention to large floaters that occur more than one or twice a week as this can be a sign of retinal detachment.

A Heavy Period Flow

Some women naturally experience a more substantial period flow than others. But women who have to change

their tampons every hour might want to talk to a doctor about it. Periods that are regular but very heavy may be caused by tumors that grow in the uterus wall called uterine fibroids. The condition affects approximately twenty to eighty percent of women before they turn fifty years old. Although they are not cancerous, uterine fibroids may lead to anemia, fatigue, or a complicated pregnancy.

Lightheaded After Working Out

Women who feel lightheaded after working out might be experiencing an inner-ear problem or sinus congestion. Chances are the workout was a bit too hard. But if lightheadedness occurs despite working out in comfortable temperatures or drinking enough water, it could be a heart issue such as an irregular heartbeat or a blood value problem. Light-headedness occurs when the heart is not able to pump enough blood to the brain. If each workout causes lightheadedness and there is no other possible explanation, talk to a doctor about it.

Keep Your Feet Happy

From high heels to floppy sandals, women's feet can take a real beating. Get tips on how to keep your feet healthy and happy.

The human foot is a delicate assembly of 26 bones — a quarter of all the bones in your body. But between squeezing your feet into high-heeled pumps or wearing sandals that offer little support or shock absorption, it's not unusual for a woman's feet to be mistreated. As a result, women often complain about foot pain. Fortunately, there are many ways to correct and prevent common foot problems.

Foot Pain: An Unrecognized Epidemic

Women's feet are the objects of much scrutiny. According to a recent survey from London, nearly half of men notice a woman's feet when meeting her for the first time — and as many as a third judge her or analyze her personality based on what they see. It's no wonder that more than 84 percent of American women have experienced "foot shame" at some point in time, or that over half are frequently embarrassed about their feet, as per the results of another survey by the American

Podiatric Medical Association (APMA). Younger women, more concerned about style than comfort, are more affected than older women, the survey found.

"It does affect women more than men, and it has a lot to do with cosmetic influences on women," says Crystal Holmes, DPM, a podiatrist and clinical instructor of podiatry at the University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor. "We also have more affection for shoes and shopping and fashion, and shoes play a big role in fashion, so having feet that might be considered cosmetically displeasing is an issue." High heels are especially punishing on women's feet, notes Dr. Holmes, and can cause a lot of foot pain. "If you have heels more than 2 inches high, it increases the forefoot pressure under the ball of your foot by seven times. So an average woman of 120 to 155 pounds with heels over 2 inches high has roughly 700 to 800 pounds of pressure in that area. So it makes sense that it should be painful."

Foot Pain: Common Complaints

Visits to the podiatrists for foot pain often reveal the following problems:

Bunions. This deformity makes the big toe slant toward the other toes and causes joint swelling and pain. Shoes with narrow, pointy toes can aggravate a genetic tendency towards bunions; wearing "sensible shoes" and, when necessary, surgery, can often help. "High heels do not cause bunions or hammertoes, as these are generally genetic, but they can aggravate them," warns Holmes.

Foot fungus. Athlete's foot, which is caused by a fungal infection, manifests itself as dry, itchy skin on the feet. It can be prevented by washing your feet daily and carefully drying between your toes afterwards. Foot odor caused by excess foot perspiration can also be improved by good foot hygiene and frequent changing of shoes and socks.

Hammertoes. Severely bent toes, or hammertoes, are often made worse by excessively narrow shoes and by the presence of bunions.

Corns. Corns on the toes are caused by friction between skin and ill-fitting shoes. Corns can be uncomfortable,

but special padding or mole-skin can help to protect the skin.

Spurs. Heel spurs occur when bone grows abnormally under the heel bone, and sometimes occur in conjunction with plantar fasciitis, the swelling and irritation of tissues in the sole of the foot. Treatment runs the gamut from cortisone shots to custom-made shoes.

Warts. Caused by a virus, warts are usually harmless and easily removed by a podiatrist. Avoiding walking barefoot can help prevent warts.

Ingrown toenails. These can be caused by anything from inadequate nail cutting to tight shoes. Fungal infection can also complicate ingrown toenails.

Diabetic foot sores. Americans are increasingly at risk of diabetes, but women are additionally at risk of gestational diabetes during pregnancy. Without proper foot care, diabetes can lead to poorly healing foot sores and infection.

Foot Pain: No More Aching Feet

Follow these steps to help prevent or correct foot problems:

1) Do not ignore foot pain. See a podiatrist if any pain persists.

2) Wash feet regularly and dry them thoroughly, especially between your toes.

3) Buy shoes that fit right. Avoid flimsy sandals with insufficient support as well as heels more than 2 inches high.

4) Limit the time you wear high heels, and alternate them with more comfortable, flat shoes. Holmes emphasizes that when it comes to getting shoes that fit well, women need to know that their foot size and shape can change over time as well as with weight changes. In general, feet get bigger over time, but they can get smaller if you lose weight. In addition, arthritis and trauma could change your foot size, as can pregnancy.

"If you have a foot condition, seek medical advice," advises Holmes. "Seek help early. Pain is not normal. Pain is your body telling you something is wrong and you should get help."



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