

# How to heal cracked heels

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Cracked heels, also known as fissures, can be a nuisance and even bleed sometimes, but can occasionally lead to more serious problems if left untreated.

Treat them by giving your feet a little more attention, beginning with moisturizing them at least twice a day. Look for thick moisturizers (Eucerin, Cetaphil, others). Some moisturizers contain skin-softening agents, such as urea, [salicylic acid](#) or alpha hydroxy acid, which may help remove dead skin. They may cause slight stinging or irritation.

Give your heels extra attention before going to bed: Soak your feet for about 10 minutes in plain or soapy water and pat dry. Then gently rub your heels with a loofah or foot scrubber to help remove dead skin. Apply a heavier, oil-based cream or [petroleum jelly](#) (Vaseline, Aquaphor Healing Ointment, others), then slip on a pair of thin cotton socks at bedtime to help the moisturizer work.

Don't ignore dry, cracked heels, as over time you may develop deeper fissures, which increases your risk of infection. If self-care measures don't help, talk with your [health care provider](#) about other treatment options.

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