

10 Must-Have Natural Remedies

YOGA

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

TRANSFORM YOUR ANGER

Channel its power,
change your life

RIGHT AT HOME

A 10-Minute Yoga Practice
You'll Love

BEAT THE ODDS

A New Twist on
Breast Cancer Prevention

The Yoga of Play

Ancient secrets
for a calmer life

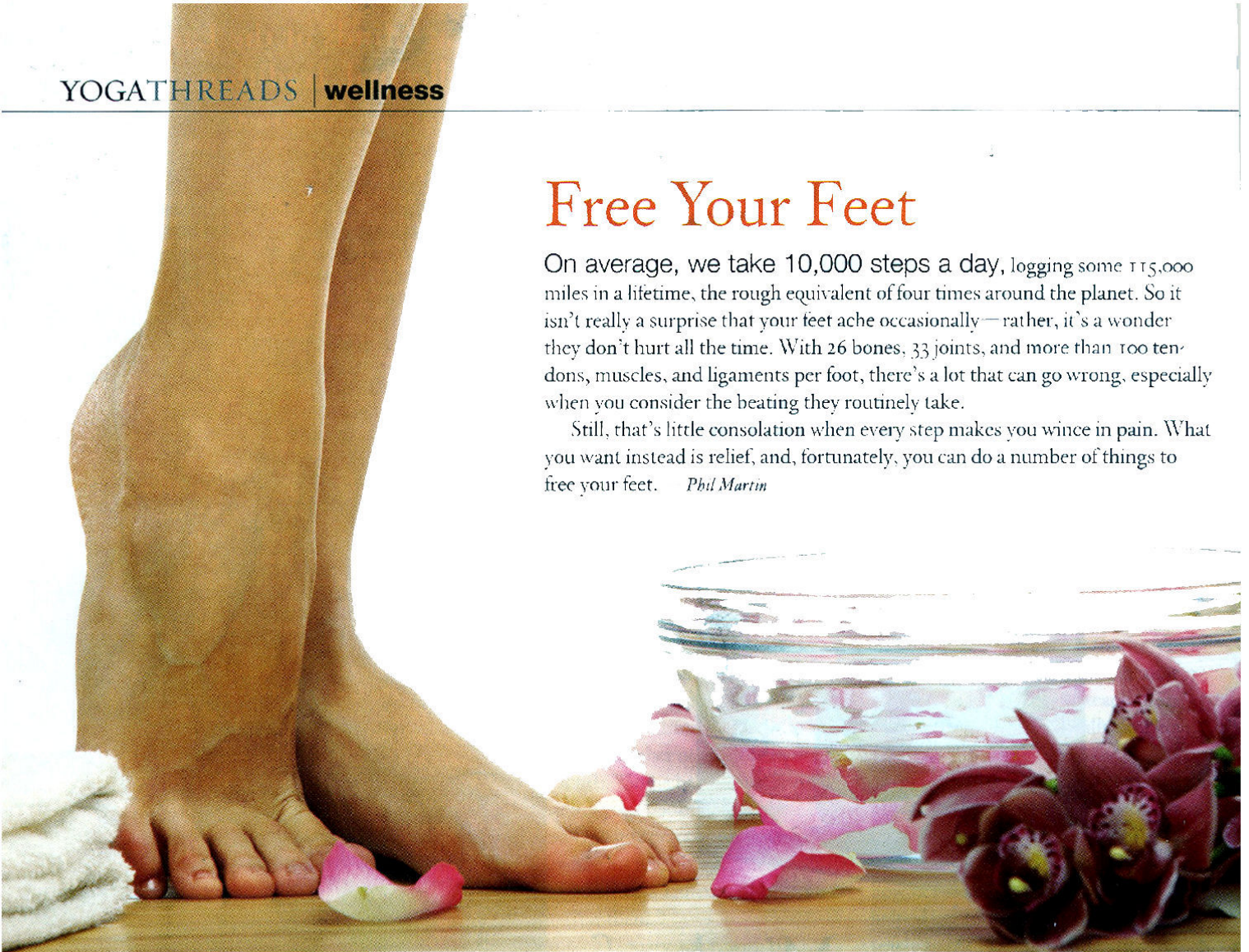


\$4.99US \$6.99CAN



0 71486 02880 2

FALL 2012 ■ THE MAGAZINE OF THE HIMALAYAN INSTITUTE ■ YOGAINTERNATIONAL.COM



Free Your Feet

On average, we take 10,000 steps a day, logging some 115,000 miles in a lifetime, the rough equivalent of four times around the planet. So it isn't really a surprise that your feet ache occasionally — rather, it's a wonder they don't hurt all the time. With 26 bones, 33 joints, and more than 100 tendons, muscles, and ligaments per foot, there's a lot that can go wrong, especially when you consider the beating they routinely take.

Still, that's little consolation when every step makes you wince in pain. What you want instead is relief, and, fortunately, you can do a number of things to free your feet. *Phil Martin*

FOOTLOOSE—AND FANCY—FREE

According to Stephanie Slon, a reflexologist in Alberta, Canada, (stephsreflexology.com), walking barefoot in the grass decreases anxiety and depression by 62% and increases those feel-good endorphins.

Massage **YOUR SOLE**

Tired, sore feet respond well to massage therapy, benefiting from the way even, gentle pressure floods the foot with fresh blood and pushes out toxins and lactic acid. Try one of the following techniques:

- 1 Using some essential oil, massage the *pada madhya* marma point (between the second and third metatarsals, about a third of the way from the base of the second toe to the heel). According to Vasant Lad of The Ayurveda Institute, this relieves foot pain, headaches, and stress.
- 2 Sit down and place a tennis ball under the ball of your foot. Slowly roll it back and forth, making sure to focus on particularly tight areas. If you need more pressure, stand up and place the ball under the problem foot, with your other foot planted firmly on the ground.
- 3 Soak your feet in a tub of Epsom salts and lavender oil, and then rub them with lotion that contains soothing emollients.

Wear Better Shoes

Eight out of 10 women say their feet hurt, and yet 9 out of 10 wear shoes that are too small. Over time, too-tight, too-pointy shoes with too high a heel shoehorn the foot into an unnatural position, pushing the big toe out of alignment and forcing the joint outward until a bunion forms. Choosing shoes with a roomier toe box and heels no higher than 2¼ inches will provide relief—and more than an ounce of prevention—even for those with a genetic predisposition for bunions.

To help prevent bunions, place a foam or plastic spacer between the big toe and the rest of the toes at night to reduce pressure and help straighten the foot.

To soothe bunion pain, brew a strong cup of chamomile

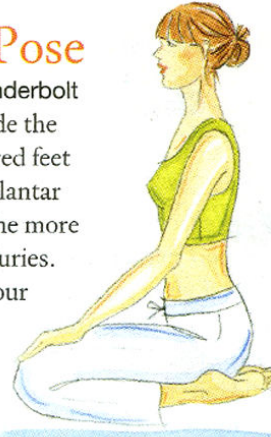
tea and place the used tea bag directly on the bunion; slowly massage the affected area with the tea bag in place. The homeopathic remedy *Silicea* (6C twice a day for two weeks) may help dissolve the arthritic deposits around the big toe joint.

To avoid bunion pain altogether, go barefoot as often as possible. Barefooting can help strengthen cramped ligaments, straighten clenched toes, and lift flat arches—all of which helps decrease back, knee, and hip problems. Working through your whole foot as you walk, jump, and run encourages better balance and enhances coordination. And, of course, there's nothing like feeling the warm sand between your toes on a hot summer day. >>

Strike a Pose

Vajrasana (thunderbolt pose) may provide the most relief for tired feet and the pain of plantar fasciitis, one of the more common foot injuries.

The key: keep your heels close together so your weight gently stretches the ligament (plantar fascia) that runs from your heel to the ball of your foot. You can intensify the stretch—and affect the calves and the Achilles tendon—by tucking your toes under as you sit back on your heels.



FOOT GEAR

Vegan Gaia Sandals (\$125; jul.com) when "barefooting" isn't an option ▼



Footsie Roller (\$12.95; amazon.com) for a deeper massage ▼



▲ **YogaToes** (\$39.95; yogapro.com)

▶ **Dermelect Runway Ready Luxury Foot Treatment** (\$25; dermelect.com)



▶ **No-Slip Yoga Socks** (\$19.98; gaiam.com) to align, stretch, and strengthen your toes



▶ **Emily Baby & Adult Skin Soother** (\$13.99; emilyskinsoothers.com) for a soothing end-of-the-day treat for your feet

