



# Science *Friction*

*Banish blisters forever  
by following a few  
easy tricks.*

*By Nicki Miller*

Why do you suffer from painful blisters when your running buddy can go for miles without a pinch? Some people are simply prone to them, says Dr. Lee Cohen, a New Jersey sports medicine podiatrist, and it most often comes down to the shape of your feet.

But even if your tootsies are naturally blister-prone, you can still take steps to make them blister-proof. For starters, ensure your shoes fit well and be sure to mix up your training gradually—don't go from running on a completely flat treadmill to tackling hills outside.

Cohen notes that it's important to hydrate your feet inside and out. Drink plenty of H<sub>2</sub>O and moisturize regularly with a foot cream. When you do head out for a run, **take these three simple steps** to avoid painful sores that slow you down when you'd prefer to be hitting your stride.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT DRAPER

#1

Cohen says you need to decide: "Am I a sweater or not?" If you tend to perspire, use a powder (*Gold Bond Medicated Foot Powder*, \$9 for 10 oz., [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com)). If your dogs stay dry, swipe a stick on trigger zones (*Dr. Scholl's Blister Defense Stick*, \$7, [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com)).

#2

Some products you use to help blisters heal can help prevent them before they occur. If you have a hot spot that often gets tender, add a layer of protection. A liquid or spray provides a coating (*New-Skin Liquid Bandage*, \$6, [walgreens.com](http://walgreens.com)) and a fabric bandage creates a plastic shield (*Band-Aid Advanced Healing Blister for Fingers & Toes*, \$4, [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com)).

#3

"Friction and sheer forces cause blisters," explains Cohen. He recommends seamless, fitted synthetic socks (*SockGuy Channel Air*, \$12, [sockguy.com](http://sockguy.com)) and forget the theory of doubling up—one pair should do the trick. ■



## Ouch, I Got a Blister!

Dr. Cohen says do as little as possible: "You don't want the roof to come off!" If you need to pop it, sterilize a needle with alcohol first, and leave as much of the skin intact as you can, so it will heal more quickly. Then use a liquid bandage (warning: it will burn!) and cover with a fabric bandage.

