

10 OF THE BEST

HAIR & SCALP PRODUCTS



Boots Expert Dry Scalp Intensive Soothing Lotion £3.49
SOOTHING lotion designed to relieve the discomfort of an itchy, dry or flaky scalp. Use daily after washing hair. Boots nationwide.

Activ Shampoo, £9.99
FOR hair loss due to pregnancy or menopause. Claims to nourish the scalp, tackling this sort of hair problem. Stockists: 0800 328 9214 www.activhaircare.co.uk



Pure Baby Hypoallergenic Hair and Scalp Care, £8.99
FOR treating infants' dry scalp and cradle cap. Non-medicated and 100 per cent fragrance free. Stockists: 0141 639 4441; www.purebabyuk.com

X-it Repellent Spray, £6.99
USES plant aromas to prevent head lice. Peppermint scented and gentle on the scalp. From selected pharmacies or www.xitheadlice.co.uk



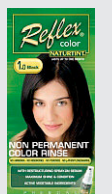
Revivogen, £65 for three-month treatment
DERMATOLOGIST formulated hair loss treatment. Contains natural ingredients clinically proven to prevent hair loss. Stockists: 01932 571 155; www.passion4health.co.uk

Organic Enriching Hair Oil, £24.99
CONTAINS the plant extract neem, known for its anti-inflammatory properties which help itchy scalps. Stockists: 0113 226 5849; www.saafpureskincare.com



The Oregon Hair Care Pack, £14.99
PSORIASIS scalp treatment containing Oregon Grape Root, a plant extract. Mail order: 0871 871 9975; www.skinshop.co.uk

Kudos Hair Nutrient Formula, £13.55 for 60 caps
CONTAINS the amino acids that make the protein healthy hair needs. From Harrods, Selfridges, John Bell & Croydon or tel: 0800 389 5476; www.kudosvitamins.com



Reflex, £10.99
A semi-permanent colourant free from peroxide, ammonia and resorcinol, which can all irritate the scalp. Suitable for those with eczema or psoriasis. Stockists: 0845 601 8129 or www.naturesdream.co.uk

Hedrin Headlice Solution 50ml £4.99
SMOTHERS the insects and cures infestation without the need for pesticides or time-consuming combing. Pharmacies nationwide or www.hedrin.co.uk



TANIA ALEXANDER

Shoe that warns if you're going to fall

By PAT HAGAN

A SHOE that predicts if someone is likely to fall could slash the number of hip fractures suffered by the elderly.

Called the iShoe, it is actually a high-tech insole packed with computerised sensors that can monitor balance through the soles of the feet.

By checking which parts of the foot are bearing the most pressure, the 'smart' insole can work out the risks of a dangerous fall.

At the moment, the experimental device is able only to relay the results to a computer for doctors to analyse.

If the patient is at risk, they can be referred for strength training such as t'ai chi to reduce their risk.

But scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where it was developed, hope to install an alarm system that can warn of an impending tumble.

Falls are becoming an increasing problem for the NHS as the population ages.

One in three people aged over 65 and one in two of those over 80 suffers a serious fall at least once a year.

Not only do falls cause broken bones and head injuries, they can leave people disabled, fearful and dependent on others for everyday chores.

According to the charity Help the Aged, falls cost in the region of £1.8 billion a year in terms of treatment and care of those affected.

One of the most common problems is hip fractures, often due to underlying osteoporosis.

Those over the age of 65 who break a hip have a 20 per cent chance of dying within a year. If they survive, they still have



Picture: ALAMY, posed by models

another 20 per cent chance of never regaining their mobility.

One reason why the elderly are so at risk is that the nerves most distant from the brain, such as in the foot, tend to decline in activity as part of the ageing process.

These nerves normally relay signals to the brain about which part of the foot is bearing the most weight and whether that is

going to affect balance. If there is any indication that the body might be about to topple over, the brain makes an immediate adjustment by realigning the body's balance. In an ageing body, this split-second adjustment often breaks down.

Scientists at MIT originally developed the clever insole to help Nasa monitor balance problems in

astronauts returning from space. Floating in zero gravity upsets the vestibular system, one of the body's internal mechanisms for controlling balance and the ability to stand up straight. Astronauts returning to Earth often stumble badly.

In order for scientists to analyse if someone is at risk of a fall, the insole is worn in both shoes for a few hours while the patient goes about their daily life.

During that time, the sensors constantly analyse the activity of proprioceptors, sensors in the skin that detect where pressure is being exerted on the sole of the foot.

The insole is then wired up to a doctor's computer program to be analysed.

Signs that this pressure is not evenly spread but is periodically concentrated in certain areas of the foot can give vital clues as to whether a fall is likely.

Researcher Erez Lieberman, who developed the iShoe, is currently testing it on 60 elderly people.

The technology mirrors other attempts to use high-tech shoes to boost health.

Boston University researchers are working on vibrating shoes that could help stroke victims get back on their feet by prompting nerves in the legs to send messages to the brain when the patient is off balance.

Charlotte Potter, the senior policy officer at Help the Aged, said anything that helps reduce falls in the elderly would be a good thing.

'Falls are a huge problem. One person dies every five hours as a result of a fall. If this invention can identify those most at risk it would be very helpful.'

'But we also need the services in place to support these people once they are identified. At the moment, those services are very patchy across the UK.'

DID YOU KNOW?

ONE in five MPs has personal experience of mental health problems, according to a Government survey. But a third of them would never admit it publicly for fear of embarrassment.

Painless cure for ingrown nails

A 'SMART' metal device could treat and prevent ingrown toenails.

The device, made up of metals including copper and aluminium, changes shape when it comes into contact with higher temperatures.

It clips over each side of the nail; the middle section, when warmed by body heat, pulls the outer edges of the device upwards and towards the centre. This has the effect of pulling the sides of the nail up and out, making sure they don't grow into the skin.

Researchers at Sendai Red Cross Hospital, Japan, who are testing the product, say the process is pain-free.

An ingrown toenail occurs when the edge of the nail grows down into the soft tissue of the toe. It can lead to pain and infection, and some patients need to have the nail partly removed under local anaesthetic. Around 10,000 new cases are treated in the UK every year.

Cakes and biscuits raise risk of cancer

TRANS FATS may increase the risk of colon cancer, according to new U.S. research. Already linked to heart disease, the fats have been found to increase the risk of benign growths called adenomas, which can develop into cancers.

Some trans fats occur naturally in meat and dairy products, but problems arise with artificial ones formed during a food process called hydrogenation, which turns liquid vegetable oil into solid fat at high temperatures. This is often used in cakes, biscuits and processed foods and can cause high levels of artery-clogging cholesterol, which causes heart attacks. The new study found that people with most trans fats in their diets were 86 per cent more likely to have colorectal adenomas. Why, is not yet clear, but it is thought they may build up in the tissue and make it more vulnerable to cancer.

Can magnets treat lazy eyes?

WAVING a magnetic coil next to the head to stimulate brain neurons responsible for eyesight could be a new treatment for lazy eye in adults.

Researchers have found the technique, called transcranial magnetic stimulation, appears to temporarily boost eyesight. One 15-minute session can lead to a 30-minute improvement in vision, according to tests carried out at McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

Although it's not a permanent cure, it's hoped the breakthrough could help solve a problem which, until now, was thought to be untreatable in adulthood.

Lazy eye, or amblyopia, is a condition where a child's vision does not develop properly, usually in one eye. Wearing a patch over the good eye helps the lazy eye work harder, gradually boosting eyesight. But studies show this works only up until the age of about eight.