

Footwear Tips

Based on presentation by Jonathan Robinson C PED (C) of Able Orthotics June 16, 2005

- Shoes should have firm mid-soles, excessive cushioning is unnecessary; your body's shock absorption capacity is adequate.
- If you can easily push / squish the mid- soles of shoes with your thumb they are too soft, avoid flip-flops, soft soles exaggerate foot problems.
- Buy shoes in the evening when your feet are at their biggest, feet can increase up to half a size over the day.
- Shoes should be a thumbs width longer than your longest toe (which is not always the big toe) on your larger foot, get someone else to check this as your feet move back in your shoes when you lean over to do it yourself.
- Shoes should not bend at the arch (your foot does not bend there) soles should be firm and bend only at the widest part where the ball of your foot goes.
- Running shoes are better suited for walking or running than cross trainers.
- Runners should have rocker soles, toes that are elevated,(if you press on the toes the heel comes up off the ground).
- Usually (but not always) the more expensive a shoe the better quality it is
- On average runners last 500 miles
- If shoes are damaged or worn out replace them before you cause an injury.
- To size shoes for width and shape take out the insoles and set your feet on them, if your foot is wider than the insole then shoe will be too tight/small. You should be able to see a bit of the insole around the edges.
- Feet often get bigger during /after pregnancy, this new size will most like stay
- Feet grow through out a lifetime, don't expect to wear the same size you wore in high school.
- The most common mistake made when buying is to get shoes that are too small.
- With today's expertise you should not have to put up leg and foot pain, if you have this type of pain try to do a self evaluation: what makes it better/worse, what have you changed (new shoes, longer/different exercise routine)?? If necessary make some changes and give it some time, if things do not change go to your doctor and get a referral for a physiotherapist or a pedorthist.
- Examine shoes carefully before buying them; even the best brand name shoes can have faults.
- Poorly selected or poor fitting shoes can affect your posture and lead to such things as back pain and headaches.
- While shoes may need to be broken in a bit, they should be comfortable when you walk out of the store.
- If you find the perfect pair of runners for yourself buy another pair now and stash it away , models change very rapidly and your favorite shoe may not be around when you wear the first pair out.
- Avoid high heels; try not to wear more than .75 of an inch.
- Heel height is measured as the difference between the height of the sole of your shoe and thickness of the shoe under the front of your heel.