



FOOTWEAR

Footwear should be designed to support your feet, the purpose of footwear is to protect your feet from damage to your skin and damage to the architecture. Unfortunately, 'fashionable' shoes have a long track record of achieving the opposite. When shopping for shoes, there are several things you can check that will tell you if that shoe is going to help or hinder your feet.

5 key features:

ALL supportive footwear will have the following features, they are all equally important

- Adjustable fastening: The shoe should hold your foot, not the other way around. Laces, velcro & well placed buckles allow adequate space for toes without overworking muscles
- Firm heel counter: This allows your muscles to have a break when your leg swings through the air instead of having to tense up in preparation for the next step. It also holds insoles if you need to wear them.
- Firm midfoot: Your foot doesn't bend up & down in the middle so your shoes don't need to either
- Toe spring: Your toes do bend up & down so don't make the effort any harder than it has to be
- Adequate fit: Length, Width AND Depth are all important in making sure you don't develop pressure lesions like corns, callous & ulcers

If you can achieve these features in a shoe, your muscles will do a lot less work when walking.



Other important suggestions that will enhance your foot health inside your shoes include:

- Keep in good repair, replace if worn out
- Make sure shoe is appropriate to the activity – you don't wear sneakers to the Hilton nor high heels to the beach
- Be really fussy – shoes don't need 'breaking in' any more
- Heel height less than 3cm
- Natural materials
- Firm rubber soles
- Shop in the afternoon as your feet will be at their biggest around this time
- Always try shoes on standing up
- Wear socks, preferably your own
- Shop around