



CLINICAL TOPIC OF THE SEASON

We are often asked for professional advice on various diagnosis and treatment matters and will address these in our newsletters. Many of these subjects are covered under TOPICS in our website at <http://www.podiatryaffiliates.com>. One of the most frequently asked questions is, "How do you select an athletic shoe?"

SELECTING AN ATHLETIC SHOE

The majority of runners exhibit some form of pronation syndrome. This is where the arch "rolls inwards" during gait. This may be structural in nature or a compensation for different types of foot function. It may be normal for some people and abnormal for others. It is extremely important to select the proper athletic shoes to prevent injury.

1. **Sport Specific Shoe.** Plan to select a shoe specific for the sport in which you will participate. For example, you should not play soccer in tennis shoes, tennis in aerobic shoes, or jog in football cleats. Purchase a sport specific shoe for each sport you participate in.

2. **Specialty Shoe Store.** It is best to visit a store that specializes in athletic shoes and has a good reputation in your community. If you are a runner, make certain you ask local runners clubs and runners that you know, where they purchase their shoes. You might also call the office of a local sports podiatrist for suggestions.

3. **Bring Useful Information.** What injuries you have had in the past and what, if anything, is your current problem? Bring your old shoes into the store. Know what shoes have been successful in the past and which ones caused problems. What is your general foot type? How have your previous shoes worn?

4. **Have Your Feet Measured.** As you age, you'll find that your foot size may gradually change. Each manufacturer often changes where their shoes are made and the last that the shoe is made will vary among manufacturers. Measurements should include sitting, standing, heel to toe, heel to ball, and width. In spite of obtaining a number from a Braddock measuring device, you still need to fit the shoe to your foot.

5. **Wear Socks You Run In and Take Orthotics With You.** If you wear an insert, an orthotic, or an orthotic with a flat insert underneath it, bring these along to the shoe store. Be sure to wear the same sock you normally run in to try on the shoes.

6. **A Finger Width Between Longest Toe and End of Shoe.** The shoe should be fit with an index finger's width between the longest toe and the end of the shoe. The toe box should have adequate room for your toes. The shoe should bend at the ball of your foot where your toes bend. If the heel to ball fit is inaccurate, the break of the shoe will not match your foot in the shoe. The heel should be stable and not move in and out.

7. **Check The Shoe For Defects.** Examine the exterior of the shoe for tears, improper stitching, and other blemishes or defects. Place the shoe on a level counter to make sure the shoes line up evenly, stable, that the heel is straight and there are no obvious defects.

8. **Check The Wear of Your Shoes Regularly.** Make sure you examine and and replace your shoes regularly. Most shoes last between 350-500 miles of running. Checking and changing your shoes regularly is the best way to avoid the doctor's office. Avoid a training schedule that causes you to do too much, too soon, too quickly, and too often. Check the shoes for too much outside wear, that the heel is not tilted in or out, and there are no holes worn by the pressure of your toes.

9. **Don't Wear a New Shoe in a Race.** When you enter a race, wear your old socks and shoes that are already broken in.

10. **Select Appropriate Socks.** Cotton socks are available everywhere, but are not often appropriate for your specific sports activity. The best sock is often one made of synthetic fibers that "wick" moisture away from your feet.



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11. Additional Resource. For more information on choosing appropriate athletic shoes, visit the website of The American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine at <http://www.aapsm.org>.

ATHLETE'S FOOT

Athlete's foot, commonly known as Tinea Pedis, is a skin disease caused by a fungus. Hot weather and foot perspiration make it a common problem.

Typical signs include itching, dry and cracking skin, inflammation with a burning sensation, and pain. Blisters and swelling may occur if left untreated.

Preventive measures include washing feet daily; drying them thoroughly, especially between the toes; wearing moisture-wicking socks; changing socks and shoes regularly; and using good moisture absorbina foot powders.

Over-the-counter creams, solutions, and powders commonly available at local drugstores include Clotrimazole, Lamisil, Lotrimin, Micatin, Tinactin, and Tolnaftate. Zeasorb-AF is available as a powder and a lotion/powder combination.

When over-the-counter treatment fails, see your local podiatrist for professional care.

ANKLE SPRAINS AND STRAINS

Briefly, the initial self treatment for mild sprains and strains, is to follow the **RICE** theory. This represents the following:

R - Rest

I- Ice

C- Compression

E- Elevation

The first 24 hours after an injury are the most critical for beginning treatment. This will decrease swelling, lessen the risk for further injury, and help to eliminate prolonged healing.

REST- Stay off the part as much as possible and refrain from activities.

ICE- Apply ice for 10-20 minutes at a time four times a day for the first 48 hours. This will help keep swelling down.

Compression- A lightly applied ace wrap will help keep swelling down as well as support the part. Do not use the ace wrap at night to sleep.

Elevation- Elevate the injured area above the heart as much as possible for the first 48 hours. This helps to keep blood away from the injured area and reduces pain and swelling. In bed at night, a pillow may be used for elevation.

Anti-inflammatory medications, such as Ibuprofen (Motrin), Advil, Aspirin, etc. may also help to reduce pain and swelling. These should be taken **AS DIRECTED** on the bottle.

If these self-treatment suggestions fail to resolve the symptoms within a week, you should seek professional help. If the injury is more than mild, you should seek professional care immediately.

NEW PRODUCT SECTION

New Products:

- Silicone spacers for toes
- Silicone crest pads for hammer toes
- Topical antifungal that penetrates thicker nails
- Custom orthoses utilizing a digital scanner
- Custom insoles and diabetic shoes now available at our offices

See our website for details:

<http://www.podiatryaffiliates.com>

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