

Podiatry Service

Footwear Information

Patient Information leaflet



Tips for footwear

A good shoe should support and protect your foot, and allow natural movement during walking.

Poorly fitting footwear can cause many problems, such as corns, callous and ingrown toenails.

Many foot problems can often improve with a change in footwear.

There are many different types of shoe available and it is important to find a style that suits you and the activity you are undertaking.

Things to consider when choosing footwear

There are many parts to a good shoe:

The **upper** is made of leather with seam free linings. Leather allows your feet to breathe and is more flexible and comfortable.



The **toe-box** is deep, wide and roomy to prevent pressure on the toes and joints on the side of the foot.

The **sole** is cushioned and flexible with adequate grip.

The **heel-counter** (back of the shoe) is strong, to stabilise the heel during walking.

The **heel** is no more than 4cm (1 ½ inches) high and broad enough to provide stability.

The **fastenings** should allow the shoe to be secured to the foot, and prevent movement inside the shoe. Laces are ideal but Velcro straps or buckle straps may be easier to use.

Tips on buying footwear

Match the shape and size of the shoe to your foot.

Many people have one foot larger than the other. Buy shoes to fit the larger foot. There should be 1cm (just less than ½ an inch) of room in the length of the shoe.

If your feet swell, make sure that you buy your shoes later on in the day so you know they will accommodate the swelling. Make sure that the shoe has laces or straps that can be adjusted to fit your foot well at all times of the day.

Different brands of shoe are sized differently. Have your feet measured only as a guide.

Wear shoes that are suited to the activity you are doing.

There are many reasons why people can have difficulty finding suitable shoes. A podiatrist will be able to advise you on what type of footwear would be suitable for you.

Many people wear orthoses (moulded insoles) in their shoes. These should only be worn as directed. When trying on shoes make sure that you take your orthoses with you.

Wear the type of hosiery you anticipate that you will be wearing with the style of shoe you are buying.

Do not buy shoes that you think you will have to 'break in'. Feel inside the shoe to make sure there is nothing rough, or seams that will catch. Walk around the shop to ensure both shoes fit correctly.

Socks and tights

It is also important to consider the type of hosiery you wear inside the shoe.

Stockings, tights and socks should be well fitting. Bulky seams can cause irritation or pressure.

Consider the material, cotton will allow the feet to breathe, while wool will provide extra warmth to cold feet.

Surgical or support stockings should be worn only as directed, and should be checked for fit by the provider.

Trainers

The trainer is a type of footwear that supports the foot in such a way as to allow the person to walk as naturally as possible.

Good fitting trainers will support the foot's bones and improve normal function.

Modern lightweight breathable materials offer an alternative to previous leather, plastic and canvas footwear.

Useful contacts

The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists

1 Fellmongers Path
Tower Bridge Road
London

Tel: 0845 450 3741/3722

Website: www.feetforlife.org

British Footwear Association

3 Burystead Place
Wellingborough
Northants NN8 1AH

Tel: 01933 229005

Website: www.britfoot.com

Disabled Living Foundation

380–384 Harrow Road
London. W9 2HU

Tel: 0845 130 9177

Website: www.dlf.org.uk

AHP Outpatients Services – Podiatry

Top Floor
Clackmannanshire Community Health Care Centre
Hall Park

Sauchie FK10 3JQ Telephone: **01259 290511**

NOTES

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NHS Forth Valley Administration Offices
Westburn Avenue, Falkirk, FK1 5SU
www.nhsforthvalley.com

