



WONDERS of WALKING®

## What ABOUT Your Feet

By Judy Heller

When you think about preparing for an activity do you consider ***your feet?*** If you are like most people, you probably don't. Feet are overworked and under pampered until something goes wrong.

Do you know?

### **25% of the body's bones**

The foot has 26 separate bones, which is 25% of the bones in the human body.

### **Joints, Ligaments, Muscles and Tendons**

33 joints, 107 ligaments, 19 muscles and tendons hold the structure together and allow it to move in a variety of ways.

### **Shock Absorber**

The foot is an amazing shock absorber that must receive and distribute the weight of the body during dynamic locomotion. These bones and muscles form flexible *arches* that support the weight of the body. It protects the rest of the body from shock with every step.

### **Several hundred tons**

Imagine that the average person takes 5000 - 8000 steps each day. By choosing to walk or run, you may take as many as 7,500 - 10,000 steps in an hour. When you're walking there are times that the pressure on your feet exceeds your body weight, and when you're running, it can be three or four times your weight. This equates to several hundred tons of cumulative force in a day.

### **250,000 Sweat Glands**

There are approximately 250,000 sweat glands in a pair of feet, and they excrete as much as half a pint of moisture each day.

TIP: Wear socks designed to wick moisture away from the skin (no cotton).

TIP: Wear the same socks to the store that you will wear while exercising.

### **Ouch!**

Acute foot injuries are frequently caused by accidents and therefore difficult to prevent. Overuse injuries of the foot are prevented by addressing risk factors associated with injuries.

Problems people experience may be caused by:

Poorly fitting footwear \*\*\*\*

Inadequate warm-up

Over-training

Improper training progression,

Poor walking / running technique

External surface factors (holes in the road, cant of the road)

Pre-existing injuries or

Structural weaknesses

### **3% vs 75% Foot Problems**

75% of the shod population suffers from foot problems vs. 3% of the un-shod population.

### **On Your Feet**

Up to 90% of shoe wearing people wear shoes that are not properly fitted, meaning they are too small or too narrow. Foot size does change throughout a lifetime due to natural aging, hormonal changes, pregnancy, and weight gain and loss. According to Dr. Ray McClanahan DPM, Portland, Oregon, the most important part of caring for your feet is choosing the right shoes for your feet. *"Most foot problems are preventable, if the causes are understood and addressed early in a person's life. The primary cause is footwear. Shoes and boots mostly, but also socks. To wear shoes that are too small,*

*too narrow, or shaped in fashionable ways that do not resemble foot shape, is welcoming bunions, hammertoes, ingrown toenails, and a whole host of other foot ills. . . ."*

TIP: It is best to shop for your shoes in the afternoon, as your feet tend to swell a little during the day.

TIP: Look for a shoe that is relatively flat, with a toe box wide enough, deep enough and long enough for your foot, and flexible in the forefoot. This allows your foot to roll, heel to toe.

TIP: Take out the shoe liner and stand on it. If it doesn't cover your foot, the shoe may not be the right one your foot.

TIP: When you try on shoes, try them on both feet; many people have one foot larger than the other.

### **A Masterpiece**

Leonardo da Vinci referred to the foot as ***"a masterpiece of engineering and a work of art."***

Give your feet the attention they deserve. Pamper them! Massage an exfoliating foot cream into your feet once a day after showering or before bed; whenever possible, take a load off by kicking off your shoes, and putting them up; take a walk on the beach. There is no better skin smoother than sand, and how good it feels on your feet. Doing foot rolls or drawing the alphabet can stretch, strengthen and add flexibility to your feet.

*This information is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease without consulting with a qualified health care provider. Please consult your health care provider with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your condition.*

#### Resource

Dr. Ray McClanahan, DPM. NW Foot and Ankle Clinic, Portland, OR

#### Reference

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