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Keep Kids' Feet Healthy with the Right Back-to-School Shoes

The start of a new school year brings about two certainties: new clothes and new shoes. Unlike in years past, today's shelves are stocked with a variety of shoe types that run the gamut in style and fit. As such, parents have much more to consider when shopping for back-to-school shoes.

To make things easier at the shoe store, follow these tips to help minimize foot problems caused by poorly fitting or worn out shoes.

Shoes Should Fit

Your child's feet can grow up to two sizes in six months, so you need to account for growth when buying shoes. That does not mean you should buy shoes that are too big—oversized shoes cause the foot to slide forward, putting excessive pressure on the toes that may cause long-term problems. A good fit is about a finger's width from the end of the shoe to the tip of the big toe.

Tight shoes can cause blisters, corns and calluses on your child's toes, blisters on the back of the heels or ingrown nails, which can become infected. Signs of infection from ingrown nails include pain, redness or fluid draining from the area. If you notice any of these symptoms, call us to schedule an appointment so we can perform a simple and safe procedure to remove the nail.

Shoes Wear Out

Shoes lose their shock absorption over time, so inspect new and old shoes for proper cushioning and arch support. Worn-out shoes elevate the risk for heel pain, Achilles tendonitis and even ankle sprains and stress fractures. Replace any shoes with wear and tear



around the edges of the sole. When buying shoes, make sure that the toe box flexes easily and the shoe does not bend in the middle of the sole.

Children with Flat Feet

Children with flat feet need shoes with a wide toe box, maximum arch support and shock absorption. The best shoes to buy are oxford, lace-up shoes that have enough depth for an orthotic insert, if necessary.

If you have questions about which shoes are right for your child, contact our office to speak with a foot and ankle surgeon.

Ankle Fractures Often Not Diagnosed



Mistaking an ankle fracture for an ankle sprain has serious consequences when the bone does not heal correctly. A correct diagnosis ensures proper recovery and reduces long-term complications.

An ankle fracture involves a crack or break in the bones that form the ankle joint. A sprain involves a ligament or ligaments that hold the ankle bones together. Both injuries can happen simultaneously when the ankle moves beyond its normal range of motion or in an

awkward position, but a fracture requires more complex treatment than a sprain.

Pain or inability to walk are not good tests to determine if an ankle injury is a sprain or a fracture because walking is still possible with less severe injuries. Telltale signs of a fracture include bruising, blisters, significant swelling or bone protruding through the skin. In addition to bone, ankle fractures can also involve cartilage surrounding bones.

Those with unrecognized ankle fractures have a high risk of developing infection, arthritis and foot deformities that may make it impossible to walk normally again. Among those at highest risk for ankle fractures are postmenopausal women ages 50 to 70 with osteoporosis.

If you have suffered an ankle injury and are not sure if it is a fracture or a sprain, call our office to schedule an evaluation.

Protect Your Feet During Fall Yard Cleanup

Fall is the time to clear out the remains of summer gardens from the yard. Keep your feet and ankles safe from injury by following these helpful tips:

Wear Appropriate Shoes for the Task

No matter how warm it is, do not wear sandals. Wear sturdy leather shoes with support to protect your feet from sharp objects, including the blades from power equipment.

Keep Children Away from Power Equipment

Protect your kids and others from severe trauma. Leaf blowers, power lawnmowers and chainsaws should not be left out where kids are playing or where other inexperienced users have access.

Do Not Work on Wet Surfaces

You could easily slip and injure an ankle when carrying heavy loads across wet grass or leaves in your yard.

Remember, yard work is a workout! Warm up and perform stretching exercises before starting yard work, just as you would before working out at the gym. By stretching prior to activity, you can help avoid stressing muscles and tendons in the foot, ankle and calves.

Contact our office for more tips on how to keep your feet safe during fall yard cleanup.

