



PERSONAL MESSAGE

if the Shoe Fits... The First Step in Avoiding Foot Injuries

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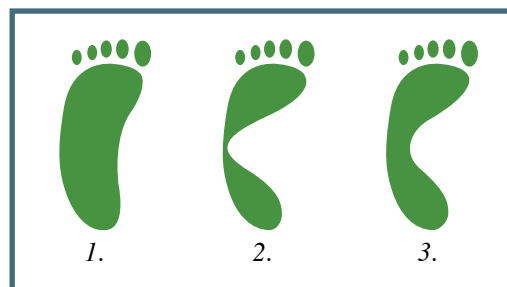
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Injuries to the feet from walking and running are often categorized as “overuse” injuries. “Overuse” implies that the injury develops gradually as a result of changes in intensity or duration of activity (faster pace or longer distance). Simply put, when you hear the term “overuse” in conjunction with foot and ankle pain, you know that the body is rejecting the level of stress acting upon it. So, how can the average person avoid overuse injuries to the feet?

A critical component to avoiding an overuse injury is to find and wear the right shoe. This can be a little challenging at first because the correct shoe must fit the shape of your foot, provide control for any abnormal motion your foot makes and finally, support your foot type. When all of these factors are addressed, non-traumatic overuse injuries decrease significantly. The key to finding the right shoe is to know more about your feet and a good place to get this information is from your physical therapist.

One way to identify your foot type is to look at your wet footprint on the sidewalk. Notice the difference between the three footprints below.



Jannette Woods-Reynolds, Staff Physical Therapist, Avante Physical Therapy

The three basic foot types are:

1. Pronated – this is the “flat foot” in which the arch is collapsed down.
2. Supinated – this is the “high arched” foot which is very stiff and rigid.
3. Neutral – this is the more ideal foot, with normal arch height.

Once you have a basic idea of your foot type, you can begin to understand the role that your shoes should play in supporting you and your activities. A simple biomechanical explanation of these three foot types are as follows: The pronated foot is too loose and mobile and is in need of extra stability or support. The supinated foot is too rigid and lacks mobility, and thus it needs more shock absorption. The neutral foot, as the name implies, does not need extra support or extra shock absorption built into the shoe.

The final step is purchasing a shoe based on the principles described above. It is critical that you use a store with staff who thoroughly understand the various shoes designed for pronators, supinators, and those with neutral feet. For a recommendation on where to get the best service and shoes for you, contact our office.

FOOT AND ANKLE PAIN

physical therapy solutions



Physical therapists understand the dynamic mechanics and cooperation that must occur between the 26 bones, 33 joints, and more than 100 muscles, ligaments and nerves in the foot and ankle.

Foot and ankle pain is a frequent complaint in people of all ages and activity levels. Traumatic injuries, such as sprained ankles or broken bones, require obvious medical attention and appropriate rehab. However many people experience pain on a daily basis that is not related to trauma or a one-time injury. These include diagnoses such as plantar fasciitis, tendinitis, metatarsalgia, heel or arch pain, achilles tendinitis, neuroma and shin splints. Many people who suffer with foot & ankle pain are unaware of the unique benefits that are available through physical therapy. Physical Therapy (PT) plays a significant role in the process of identifying the causes of pain, implementing customized treatment plans, and establishing strategies to prevent future episodes. The key here is that physical therapists can identify the *cause* of pain, and develop an individualized program that gets you back on your feet!

Physical therapists understand the dynamic mechanics and cooperation that must occur between the 26 bones, 33 joints, and more than 100 muscles, ligaments and nerves in the foot and ankle to perform two key functions. The first function of the feet is to provide shock absorption for body weight under the forces of gravity. The second function of the feet is propulsion or moving the body forward. Achieving these two functions require the feet to become mobile and adaptable while they transform into stable levers from which to push off from during walking. It's one of the body's great oxymorons: stay flexible and mobile while becoming stable. It's no wonder most foot and ankle injuries and painful conditions can be traced to an

inability of the body to perform or transition between these two key functions of shock absorption and stable lever.

Treatment of foot and ankle pain centers on an initial biomechanical evaluation that includes a detailed history and thorough hands-on physical examination. Playing "detective", a PT will find both obvious and subtle clues that are contributors to the abnormal forces acting on your feet. A critical aspect unique to physical therapy is that a PT will assess not only the feet and ankles, but also look for other problems going on higher up in the knees, hips, pelvis and on the opposite side of your body. Patients are typically surprised, but relieved, when all of the clues add up and finally make sense to them.



Implementing treatment strategies for foot pain can involve immediate pain-relieving techniques to calm down inflammation or swelling. In addition to the use of modalities (ultrasound, electrical stimulation, iontophoresis laser) there are a

number of exciting new hands-on therapy techniques that can offer quick relief of pain. In some cases, making small changes in the shoes or insoles helps the feet perform their duties efficiently and effectively. Depending on the diagnosis, there can also be a need for stretching, strengthening, and movement retraining. Since the human body is the master at compensation, retraining a normal walking gait becomes a necessary part of preventing long-term problems and recurrences. The key is always to empower the patient in the healing process through education and the development of an individualized wellness plan.

Tips and Tricks

TIPS FOR HEALTHIER FEET

Your feet are your foundation, to keep them healthier and happier you should:



1. Buy shoes based on function, not simply fashion. Going for the cheapest pair of shoes or simply for style can lead to trouble. Take the time to find good quality shoes that can meet the demands that your work and activities require.

2. Utilize running shoes for more than just running. Around home, running errands or when traveling, consider using your running shoes for those long periods of walking and standing. Correctly fit running shoes can decrease the compressive forces on your feet and also take stress off the knees, hips and back.



3. Get the correct type of shoe for your activity or sport. Avoid using a generic sneaker for your daily walks or for a sport they are not intended for. Running shoes may be fine for running and walking, but they are not appropriate for use with court sports and many other activities which require more side to side stability.

4. Give your feet the exercise they deserve. Unlike some other joints and muscles in the body, your feet are working hard to support you even when you are simply standing still doing simple daily functions. Take the time to learn some basic stretches and exercises which can diminish the stress that your feet acquire every day.



5. Perform a little "TLC Rollout". After a long day on your feet, sit down and place a small ball (the size of a golf ball, but preferably softer) under your foot. Gently roll your foot back and forth over the ball to massage various areas. Curl your toes down, up and apart periodically as you roll out some of the day's stress.

6. Always remember the joints and muscles above. While your feet are your foundation, they are also reactive to your body's constantly changing center of gravity. Imbalances at the hips, pelvis and spine will often cause unbalanced forces to act on your feet and can be the root cause for many foot and ankle problems.



7. Don't be afraid to consult with professionals who are foot/ankle specialists. The mechanics of the foot and ankle are incredibly complex. When seeking help, find a medical professional or therapist who is qualified to accurately diagnose your problem and develop a customized plan for recovery.

FAQ

I have sharp pain in my heel first thing in the morning. Can physical therapy help with that?

Sharp pain in the heel or arch experienced when you first bear weight in the morning can be a sign of plantar fasciitis. This is an inflammation of the connective tissue layering that runs across the bottom of your foot and attaches to the bottom of your heel. YES, this condition is very commonly treated in physical therapy with great success!

I work on my feet all day and my feet ache consistently. Is there a specific shoe that I should be wearing?

First, it would be important to know if your job has a requirement that must be met such as steel-toe protection or certain style (dress shoes vs. casual). Your shoes should meet two criteria: 1) They should provide adequate support and stability for the back half of your feet while not being too tight around the front half and toes, and 2) they should offer proper cushioning and shock absorption. A physical therapist can help you make good footwear choices that support your foot type and address workplace criteria.

What are the key aspects to recovering from an ankle sprain?

There should be an appropriate “rest period” after a sprained ankle, which may include immobilization or use of crutches. However, once this period is over it is critical that you regain the following: 1) Full range of motion in the foot and ankle joints; 2) Full strength in not only the foot and ankle but the entire leg; 3) Stability to balance on a single leg on a variety of uneven or unstable surfaces; 4) A normal, non-compensated walking pattern. Being proactive is the key to recovery.

I have flat feet. Does that mean that I need “arch supports” or custom orthotics?

Flat feet alone are not necessarily an indicator of a “bad” foot that requires special insoles or orthotics. What is more important is your foot’s dynamic function, which means its ability to be a shock absorber as you land, and a stable base to propel from when you push off during the walking cycle. Ask your physical therapist about your foot type and foot dynamics before buying expensive orthotics!

Do you need to see a Physical Therapist for your foot pain? Take this simple test...

Less than 2 Yes:

You’re not in big trouble yet, but should pay attention to any discomfort. By scheduling a free consultation with a physical therapist you will learn more about your foot type and foot dynamics and quite possibly avoid future foot problems.

Between 2 and 4 Yes:

Physical Therapy could definitely be an option for you, beginning with a thorough evaluation to uncover the root causes of your pain.

Between 5 and 7 Yes:

We would advise you to see a podiatrist

(foot doctor) or a physical therapist as soon as possible. Look for a health professional interested in discovering the root cause of your foot pain. Do not settle for health professionals that only address foot pain symptoms.

YES	NO	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have sharp pain in my heel/arch when I first walk in the morning or after a period of sitting.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am unable to walk for exercise or participate in my normal sports because it will aggravate my foot pain.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I experience muscle cramping and pain in my feet at the end of the day.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	My foot pain has persisted for more than 6 weeks despite my own efforts to “let it heal.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I suffer from unexplained knee pain or back pain.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I regularly experience numbness or tingling in my feet.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I cannot find comfortable shoes.



Featured Physical Therapist

Andrea Quaerna, PT



Andrea Quaerna is the Physical Therapist at Avante's Apex Clinic. Andrea has a broad variety of clinical experience working with work-related injuries, sports injuries and other musculoskeletal conditions.

"Becoming a Physical Therapist has been such a rewarding experience for me. The patients I have treated have been a pleasure to work with, and it's been wonderful getting to know them personally. For me, the most gratifying role of this profession is getting the opportunity to help patients strive for and reach their rehabilitation goals, as well as teaching them how to prevent a recurrence in the future by continued exercise and self-care."

Andrea is originally from Janesville, Wisconsin and is a graduate of Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she received her Doctorate Degree in Physical Therapy in 2005. Andrea also has a Bachelors Degree in Spanish, which she received in 2003.

Andrea's dedication to helping others contributes to the success of Avante Physical Therapy, she believes in treating the whole person, not just the body. Andrea is a valued asset and we are proud to have her as part of the Avante team.

SUCCESSSES

What patients are saying ...

My rehab program & treatment has been wonderful. My therapist pushed me to do my best and kept me informed about my condition at all times. Fabulous care all the way around. —KW

Avante Physical Therapy gave me exactly what I needed; a caring staff, personal attention, an excellent program and the BEST physical therapist! If I ever need PT again I will definitely return to Avante. —DM

I was completely satisfied with the care and attentiveness of my therapist. I would return here and recommend anyone to come to Avante for therapy. Thanks!! —CG

I have had multiple visits to Avante Physical Therapy and found my course

of treatments to be very effective! I am very satisfied with the professionalism of the entire staff. I enjoy the one-on-one sessions and the visits are always fun.

These people are



confidence based on clear evidence of expertise in his field. I have and will continue to recommend Geert and all of the Avante staff to my friends who may need physical therapy. —TM

Andrea is the best physical therapist I have ever worked with, without her I wouldn't have felt as good as I do right now! I can't imagine anyone being better than Andrea. —VS

I came to Avante after a car accident, in a lot of pain. I am leaving with more knowledge of my body, the exercises

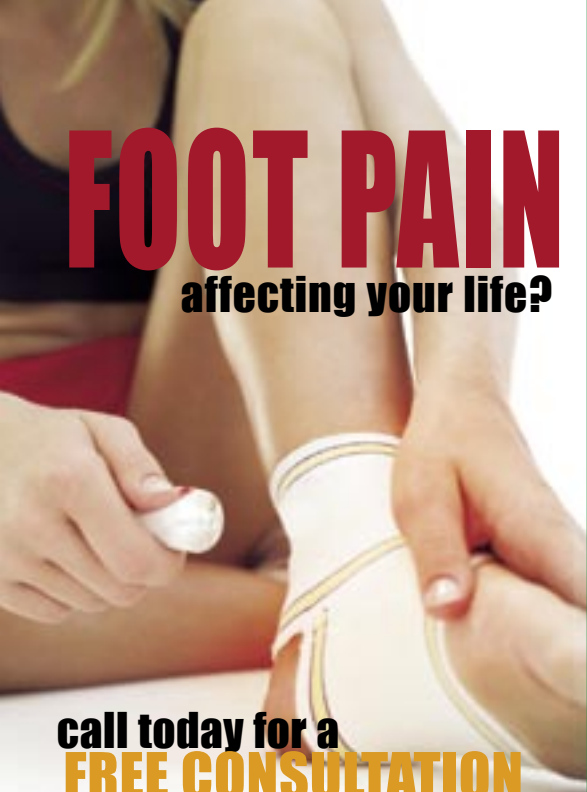
I should use and the ability to do much more than I could at the start of my therapy. Thank you so much, you are wonderful! —SJ

becoming like family. Thank You! —JH

Geert Audiens is knowledgeable and communicates well. He inspires

FOOT PAIN

affecting your life?



**call today for a
FREE CONSULTATION**

Find out if physical therapy can help you ease the pain and help you gain a new outlook on life.

Cary (919) 463-9443

Apex (919) 367-7890

www.avantept.com



A Beautiful Baby Girl to Love...

The staff of Avante Physical Therapy want to congratulate Geert and Ling on their adoption of Chen Chen, a beautiful 8 month old baby girl. Geert and Ling will be traveling to China in July to pick up her up and bring her home.

We want to wish them a safe trip. We also want to wish the Audiens family much love and happiness and we, at their Avante family, can't wait to share in the love and joy Chen Chen will bring. Again, we extend to you heartfelt congratulations!



we care about you

Call us today at

Cary (919) 463-9443

Apex (919) 367-7890

for a free consultation

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