

Exceptional footcare for all ages.

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CHIROPODIST



## Fall Newsletter 2012: Is Every Shoe a Healthy Choice?

### Back to School Shoes...

#### Do They Make the Grade?

The new school year is underway! One of the most important things we can do for our children is to make sure their feet make the grade with foot friendly shoes. On the school bus, in the classroom or on the playground, children need well constructed shoes to help reduce the risk of injury that can lead to more serious problems such as sprains, strains and fractures.

As parents, we all want our children to be happy and content, and at the same time keep them safe and protected. That's why members of the Canadian Federation of Podiatric Medicine (like Rick Werkman) want to help parents understand the importance of buying properly fitted, supportive shoes that offer protection and comfort.

In spite of what your kids tell you, it isn't all about fashion. "Not every shoe on the market is a healthy choice", says Stephen Hartman, Canadian Federation of Podiatric Medicine CEO, "Parents should look for proper toe flexibility, a rigid middle and a stiff heel when purchasing footwear for their children."

Other factors that should be considered include, buying shoes that do not need a "break-in" period. If they are not comfortable immediately, don't buy them. And as tempting as it may be, never hand down footwear. Just because a shoe fits one child comfortably does not mean it will fit the other the same way. Also sharing shoes can spread fungi like athlete's foot or nail fungus.

Children often don't complain about foot discomfort, that's why as parents we need to note changes in our children's feet. It may be necessary to change shoe and sock sizes every few months as your child's feet grow. Proper foot care is important to the overall health of children. Talk to your chiroprapist or podiatrist at the first sign of foot problems.

### 14 of the Most Nagging Foot Problems!



#### Condition #1: Athletes' Foot

Have you ever wondered why your feet often itch or become scaly in appearance? If you have, you may be suffering from a fungal skin infection. Fungus commonly attacks the feet because shoes create a warm, dark, and humid environment which encourages fungus growth. The warmth and dampness of areas around swimming pools, showers, and locker rooms, are also breeding grounds for fungi.



The fungus causes redness, cracking, itching and sometimes blisters between the toes. Drying feet thoroughly, wearing protective flip flops in the shower room, and applying talcum powder regularly can help prevent the fungus from spreading. In many cases a prescription topical medication is necessary to cure the infection.

However, not all fungal conditions are athlete's foot. Other conditions, such as disturbances of the sweat mechanism reaction to dyes or adhesives in shoes, eczema, and psoriasis, may also mimic a fungal infection. So how do you know if you have a fungal skin infection?

The signs and symptoms of a fungal skin infection can occur singly or in combination:

- Dry skin
- Itching
- Scaling
- Inflammation
- Blistering

Blisters often lead to cracking of the skin. When blisters break, small raw areas of tissue are exposed, causing pain and swelling. Itching and burning may increase as the infection spreads. Fungal skin infections may spread to other parts of the body, notably the groin and underarms, by those who scratch the infection and then touch these areas of the body. The organism causing athlete's foot may persist for long periods of time. Consequently, the infection may be spread by contaminated bed sheets or clothing to other parts of the body.

Quick tips for prevention of a fungal skin infection:

- Practice good foot hygiene
- Avoid walking barefoot; use shower shoes or Crocs
- Wear light and airy shoes
- Wear socks that keep your feet dry, and change them frequently if you perspire heavily.

If an apparent fungus condition does not respond to proper foot hygiene and self care, and there is no improvement within two weeks, consult our office and we will determine if a fungus is the cause of the problem. Take good care of your feet and they'll take good care of you! We can help!

### What You Need to Know About Orthotics:

#### Solving the Mystery of Why Some Work – and Others Don't!

Discover whether the orthotic is "prefabricated" or "custom-made" – and you've solved the mystery. Period.

**What is an Orthotic?** An orthotic is foot device used to treat aberrant biomechanical function of the feet and legs. They should be prescribed in the same careful and specific way as oral medicines. A biomechanical and gait analysis is necessary to gather such information as general mobility/restriction of the foot's range of motion, primary activity while wearing the orthotics, chief complaint or diagnosis associated with the activity, neurological and anatomical factors (shortage/deformity, etc.).

They say, "a picture's worth a thousand words". You be the judge.

Prefabricated orthotic



**Prefabricated orthotics** are already made and waiting. They are considered off-the-shelf or mass produced and only accommodate simple corrections such as a metatarsal pad. (See example of a Prefabricated Orthotic at left.)

