

NEWS

Ken Warren 203-891-9001

PROPERLY FITTING SHOES CAN EASE FOOT PROBLEMS, SAY LOCAL FOOT & ANKLE EXPERTS

DANBURY, CT (November, 2002)—With most people taking three million steps a year, it is little wonder why foot and ankle experts recommend properly fitting shoes to ward off a host of foot problems.

“Improperly fitting shoes causes more than \$3.5 million worth of foot problems a year,” said F. Scott Gray, MD, who is one of the medical directors of the Danbury Foot & Ankle Center, an adjunct of Danbury-based Connecticut Family Orthopedics. “Shoes that do not fit can cause bunions, corns, calluses, hammertoes and other foot disorders.”

According to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), 90 percent of foot surgery in the U.S. is performed on women because women tend to wear shoes that are too small.

“Women want their feet to look smaller so they tend to buy smaller shoes,” said Dr. Gray. “Even though shoe styles may sometimes feature narrow, pointy toes, that is a problem for foot health. Tight shoes squeeze the foot and increase pressure while loose shoes let the foot slide and rub, creating friction.”

“Your shoe should be in the shape of your foot,” said Podiatrist Michael Fein, DPM, who is also a medical director at the center. “The toe box should allow the toes to lie flat. Make sure you measure both feet when buying shoes because your feet are not exactly the same size. Also make sure to have both feet measured every time you purchase shoes because your foot size increases as you get older.”

Other AAOS guidelines for properly fitting shoes include:

- Stand during the fitting process and walk a few steps to make sure the shoes are comfortable. They should not hurt or be too loose. Do not expect shoes to stretch.
- There should be 1/2-inch space from the end of your longest toe to the end of the shoe.

- Your heel should fit snugly in the shoe with no slippage.
- When the shoe is on your foot, you should be able to freely wiggle all of your toes.
- Try on new shoes at the end of the day. Your feet normally swell and become larger after standing or sitting during the day.
- Women should not wear a shoe with a heel higher than 2 1/4 inches.
- When purchasing athletic shoes, wear the same type of sock that you will wear for that sport. It also is best to try on the shoes after a workout or run; your feet will be at their largest.

Connecticut Family Orthopedics of 33 Hospital Avenue includes six orthopedic surgeons, a podiatrist, and physician assistants, and has offices in Ridgefield and Bethel as well. For more information call 203 792 5558 or e-mail ct.fmly.orthpdcs@snet.net.