

General Footwear Advice

There are many styles of footwear available on the high street and internet. Knowing what size and style to choose is important to meet your individual needs. It is also important that the style that you choose is right for your lifestyle e.g. Work, school, leisure etc and provides the support you require.

Suitable footwear is also crucial if it has to work in combination with orthoses such as splints and insoles, which may need to be provided. The use of an orthosis may have an impact on the size of shoe you require.

Badly fitting shoes can damage your feet and good socks not only keep your feet comfortable, but dry.

It is worth having children's feet measured by a trained shoe fitter who will be able to advise you on their future needs.

What to look for in a shoe:



Size

If one foot is bigger than the other always buy for the bigger foot.

If your feet are prone to swell always try footwear on later in the day so that the footwear does not become too tight towards the end of the day.

There should always be approximately 12mm (1/2 ") from the end of the longest toe, and check there is sufficient width across the widest part of the foot.

The most important point of a well-fitting shoe is the correct length of the foot. Remember that all manufacturers use different shaped casts when they make their shoes, so one make may fit very differently to another even though they say they are the same.

Toe Box

This should be wide enough not to squash toes and deep enough to allow the toes to wiggle.

Heel

The heel takes a large proportion of a person's weight. The heel should not be too flat or too high. The heel should have a broad base.

Heel Counter

The proportion of the shoe that grasps the heel of the foot at the sides and back is known as the heel counter.

This prevents the heel from sliding up and down while walking. Most importantly it stabilises and maintains the position of the heel when the shoe contacts the ground. As the heel counter softens or breaks down and loses its shape, the shoe becomes less supportive. The heel counter should complement the shape of the heel of the foot.

Sole

This should have good grip and be cushioned, but not overly flexible.

What should the shoe be made of?

The upper of the shoe should be soft with no hard seams or ridges and be made from a natural fibre such as leather which allows moisture to evaporate

Socks

Socks and tights must fit and not be too tight over the toes. They should be free from seams that may rub. Socks should come above the top line of the shoe or boot.

Sources of Advice which you might find useful

www2.hse.ie/conditions/type-2-diabetes/living-with/foot-care.html

www.shoefitters-uk.org

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