

Foot Sense

FOOT AND ANKLE CENTER OF LAKE CITY



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12 Hacks to Solve Painful Shoe Problems

Have you ever purchased a shoe that caused foot pain? You're not alone. While problems with high heels and stilettos have been all over the internet, there are many other women's shoes that can put your feet in jeopardy. Different shoes can cause different kinds of foot pain. Learn about the culprits and the solutions you can use to prevent painful foot problems.

Tight Shoes, Short Shoes, and Narrow Toed Shoes

Tight or short shoes can cause your feet to hurt. But they can also increase your risk for ingrown toenails and fungal toenails. When the toenail is pushed against the front of the shoe, hiking boot, or ski boot it can become ingrown. Shoes that

are too tight or too short can cause damage to the nail plate, making it easier for fungus to set up shop. Narrow toed shoes can lead to Morton's neuroma, bunions, and hammertoes.

Solutions:

- Get your feet measured every time you shop for shoes. It's very common for adults to experience an increase in shoe size.
- Buy shoes that give you enough wiggle room in the toe box.

Learn about 10 other hacks to solve pain caused by your shoes. (over)

Spinach and Feta Pita Bake

A wonderful treat for the whole family.

- 1 tub of sun-dried tomato pesto, 6 oz
- 6 pieces of whole wheat pita bread
- 2 roma tomatoes, chopped
- 1 bunch spinach, rinsed and chopped
- 4 mushrooms, sliced
- 1/2 cups of crumbled feta cheese
- 3 Tbsp. grated parmesan cheese
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- Ground black pepper



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Spread tomato pesto onto pita and place on a baking sheet, pesto-side up.
3. Top pitas with tomatoes, spinach, mushrooms, feta, and parmesan cheese. Drizzle with olive oil and pepper.
4. Bake for about 12 minutes or until pitas are crisp.
5. Cut into quarters before serving.

Flat Shoes

In the last several years, ballet flats and other flat shoes have been all the rage. Many people have gotten the message that heels are bad, so they've flocked to shoes at the opposite end of the spectrum. But very flat shoes can be almost as bad as heels, particularly for people with flat feet. They can increase your risk for plantar fasciitis and Achilles tendonitis. When walking or engaging in other activities such as dancing or running the arch flattens out causing the plantar fascia to stretch beyond its limits causing micro tears, inflammation, and pain.

Solutions:

- Avoid flat shoes if you have flat feet, low arches, or any other foot problems.
- Buy flat shoes that have some arch support such as the Rockport Cobb Hill Mary Jane Flat.

Flexible Shoes

Flexible tennis shoes and other shoes like them certainly look comfortable. But looks can be deceiving. Flexible shoes are fine if you're walking no further than your mailbox or going food shopping. But a walk or run around Green Lake is a non-starter as flexible shoes offer no support; they can easily bend in half and be twisted from side to side. Women who've had problems with their feet in the past or have flat feet or high arches should not wear these types of shoes. I've had many patients come in with heel pain who were wearing them.

Solutions:

- Test your shoes for support before you purchase them. Shoes should not bend in the middle or twist easily.
- Tennis shoes can be supportive and comfortable. Try a Brooks Womens Launch 5 or a New Balance Women's Walking Shoe.

Pumps or Rigid Back Shoes

Pumps can be problematic for women who develop a bony enlargement called Haglund's deformity or so called "pump bump", due the location of the deformity and the rigidness of pumps. Any shoe with a rigid back can cause problems for anyone with this type of foot problem.

Solutions:

- Avoid stiff backed shoes; instead look for shoes with a soft back such as a Munro Traveler.
- Use heel lifts and heel pads can help with the irritation.
- Get custom orthotics from a podiatrist to control the foot motion and change how the foot sits in the shoe.

High Heels and Stilettos

You might still wonder, what's so bad about high heels and stilettos? While some women can get away with wearing these types of shoes infrequently, daily wear can increase your risk for ball of foot pain including bunions, neuromas, and hammertoes. When wearing high heels your weight is placed primarily on the ball of the foot which places a lot of stress on the metatarsals, the toes, and the nerves. Constant high heel wear can also shorten your calf muscles putting you at greater risk for plantar fasciitis.

Solutions:

- Limit your high heel wear by walking to work in lower heeled shoes.
- Wear heels that are one inch or lower
- Wear heels with a rounded toe box to prevent added pressure on your toes

How to Use a Pumice Stone to Pummel Tough Skin

Pumice stones are not some high falutin product reserved for use at a spa or your nail salon. When used correctly these stones are an excellent tool for keeping your feet smooth and free of dead skin. They also can keep your corns and calluses in check. However, improper use can cause pain. Here's how! Caution: People with diabetes should get an OK from their physician before using them.

- Soak your feet and your pumice stone in warm water for 5-10 mins to soften the skin.
- Pat your skin dry with a towel
- Rub the harsher side of the pumice stone over your skin in a circular motion using light pressure. Do this for 2-3 mins. Stop if your skin feel sensitive or sore.
- Rinse off your feet and if you still see patches of dead skin, repeat the process.

Adapted from Precision Foot and Ankle's April 2019 newsletter.

