

When your feet hurt, you hurt all over!

Your feet are your connection to the earth, and if they're not happy, they'll let your whole body know. Foot problems can cause pain in your feet, legs, knees and back and can lead to overall discomfort when standing or walking. Your feet do a lot of hard work and take a lot of punishment, but there are many ways which you can prevent problems from arising which can lead to long term suffering.



Walking is complicated...

The foot is a very complex part of your body. It has **26** separate bones held in position by dozens of ligaments, tendons, and muscles. These bones and muscles form flexible arches that support the weight of your body.

As you move forward to take a step, joints in your feet should "lock" to give you the leverage to push your body forward.

When you lower your foot to the ground after the heel strike, the joints should unlock to allow your foot to absorb the shock of impact. This locking and unlocking of the joints allows you to walk or run on any surface, whether it is a sandy beach, golf course, running trail or concrete footpath.

A well functioning foot is an amazing shock absorber. It protects the rest of your body from the stress of walking or running every time you take a step.

Foot Function

Your feet support your entire weight. The slightest misalignment of muscles and bones may cause problems.

Your feet function like the front end of your car. When your car's wheels are out of alignment the tyres wear out quicker, uneven stress is placed on the frame, the steering wheel begins to shake and soon the car functions so badly, you can't drive it.

A misaligned or malfunctioning foot does the same thing. If your feet are not functioning correctly, the pressure on your joints and soft tissues is uneven, the muscles can not function correctly and some body parts have to compensate for others that are not moving effectively.

Posture can be greatly affected by the alignment of your feet and ankles, and can lead to knee, hip and back pain.

What can be done?

Your my FootDr podiatrist can prescribe a custom made shoe insert, called an orthotic, to help solve your foot problems.

Orthotics are prescription devices that can be compared to eyeglasses. Just as an optometrist can improve poor vision with corrective lenses, so can a podiatrist help to correct your foot disorders with orthotic devices.

Your feet are the only pair that you will ever have. It is wise to take good care of them and to seek the attention of a podiatrist when you experience foot pain or discomfort.



Off The Shelf Arch Supports

Many "arch supports" are sold over-the-counter at sports stores and pharmacies, some are even branded "orthotics".

While they can be useful for mild concerns, they are quite different to a prescription orthotic device which is custom made for your feet. This is in the same way that non-prescription glasses from a chemist are very different to prescription eye glasses.

For further information on your foot health or to discuss treatment options with a podiatrist, please contact your local my FootDr podiatry centre.