

Choose the right footwear for your workout

By DONNA RUTEK
Copley News Service

Nike, Adidas, Reebok — to each his own. Name brands aren't how you should begin looking for an athletic shoe, according to experts.

First, you must determine what you need the shoes for — are you going running or walking are you training for a marathon or are you taking the dog for a walk once a day?

"If you're doing running, you should be absolutely in a running shoe," said Dr. Lisa Rechkemmer of Instep Podiatry, PC., in Wheaton, Ill.

But, regardless of the activity, she said, the basic things to look for in athletic shoes are support, cushioning and primarily a good fit of the shoe.

Running shoes on the whole are more flexible, according to Rechkemmer. The running shoe is cushioned throughout and many times the arch has more support, she said.

Walking shoes must have a firm back of the shoe because of the way people land on their heels when they walk, according to Rechkemmer.

Walking or crosstraining shoes can be worn by people all the time.

"Seventy-year-old ladies wear them 'cause they are comfortable," Rechkemmer said.

All kinds of athletic shoes need to have good arch support, she added.

Having a shoe that doesn't fit right most commonly leads to painful blisters, according to Rechkemmer. Improper fit of shoes can also cause arch pain or fatigue, heel pain, and pain

up the back, knees and ankles. Letting go of the favorite pair of old running shoes may be a start as well.

"Worn-out shoes are not providing cushioning support," Rechkemmer said. People can even develop tendonitis from wearing last year's running shoes.

People should replace shoes at least once a year, she said. If the shoes are worn every day, as many people do with walking shoes, they should be replaced in six months.

Just because a shoe isn't dirty, doesn't mean it's not worn out. The midsole cushioning—if there are a lot of cracks—tells you the shoe is worn out, Rechkemmer said.

Another test to see if a shoe is worn out: place it on a flat countertop, if it rocks back and forth it's time to throw the pair away.

But, don't throw them away just yet. Bring them with you to buy your next pair.

Most shoe stores have staff members who can help people find the appropriate shoe, Rechkemmer said. Different brands, different styles have different shock absorption, among other things.

Jim Stuart, manager of Dick Pond Athletics in Carol Stream, Ill., said people are encouraged to bring in their old pair of running shoes to the store, which specializes in running shoes.

"It is the biggest help. We get to see what they've been using, cushioning, support features," he said. "We can look at the bottoms of shoes and get an idea of how they are

wearing the shoes."

"There really is no best shoe for a situation," Stuart said. "Some people think they have to get top of the line, but that isn't necessarily the best for them."

Stuart said when it comes to finding the right fit, it may be trial and error.

Also, ditch the old philosophy that you have to break shoes in, according to Rechkemmer.

"You shouldn't have to break a shoe in," she explained. "A shoe should be comfortable as soon as you put them on and take a few steps."

The materials to make shoes are much better nowadays, according to Rechkemmer.

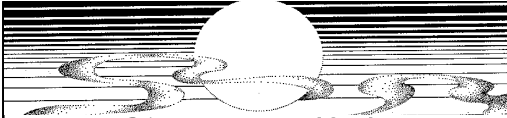
Running shoes are primarily made of a nylon component,

which allows feet to breathe, she said. Many cross-training shoes, or walking shoes, are made of leather, which also allows the feet to breathe.

And, don't forget the socks. According to Rechkemmer, socks are important in the way a shoe fits. Try to wear cotton socks, which is pretty easy to do, she said. Many socks are a blend of cotton and another material, which Rechkemmer said is okay to wear.

Don't force your foot into a shoe with a thick sock, Rechkemmer said. A medium thickness is sufficient.

If you've changed your shoes and still feel discomfort in your foot, Rechkemmer said it may be time to seek treatment.



Give yourself the gift of inner peace.
Access the peace and wisdom that are at your center.

Beginning One on One Meditation Training.
Appointments Wed. 12-3 at Higher Self Bookstore and
CROOKED TREE YOGA

231-938-3211 • ACME
 Instructor Margaret Magner
*Yoga Therapist, B.A. Psychology,
 Trained in several meditation disciplines.*

HE1-27-584131

DAVID N. GORTSEMA, MD, and REBECCA K. VOMASTEK, DO,

are pleased to announce the opening of their new Family Medicine practice:

GRAND TRAVERSE FAMILY CARE, PLC

901 West Front Street, Suite B
Traverse City • 947-3500



Their practice is conveniently located in the former Oleson's grocery store. Both physicians are accepting new patients of all ages and will accept most insurance carriers.