Are you wearing the right running shoe?

What’s Your Foot Type?
Do the Wet Test to figure out your foot type. This can be done by wetting your feet and standing on a brown paper bag. The three foot types are:

Normal  Flat  High Arch

Possible Problems
- **Flat Feet:**
  - medial foot pain
  - shin splints
  - knee pain
  - IT-band syndrome
  - hip/back pain
- **High Arched Feet:**
  - achilles tendon pain
  - heel pain
  - plantar fasciitis
  - diffuse foot pain
  - knee pain
  - hip/back pain

Pronation and Mechanics

- *Pronation* = normal/necessary foot mechanics for shock absorption
- *Excessive Pronation* = too much motion in foot and not enough support, usually poor push off
- *Rigid Foot* = common with high arched feet; minimal pronation leading to poor shock absorption

Shoe Types
Shoe companies manufacture running shoes in three main types associated with the three foot types:
- **Stability**
  - Normal and Flat feet with mildly increased pronation
  - Combo of support and cushion
- **Motion Control**
  - Flat feet with excessive pronation
  - Typically has very rigid instep support material
  - Straighter from heel to toe
- **Cushion**
  - High Arched/rigid feet
  - More flexible with more curve from heel to toe
Buying Tips
• Shoes should be replaced every 300-400 miles.
• There is variation amongst the manufacturers. A good sales person should be familiar with the previous information and be able to direct you to your correct shoe type.
• Always try on both shoes and “test” them for a few minutes in the store (jog, hopping).
• Don’t buy shoes that need a “break-in” period, they should be comfortable immediately.
• If you wear custom orthotics, bring them along.

How Physical Therapy Helps
• Understanding foot mechanics and determining contribution to pain/symptoms can be very complicated.
• Physical therapists can help examine your feet and gait as well as assess if alternate factors are contributing.
• They can also help determine if custom orthotics or inserts may be a beneficial option.

UHC Physical Therapy Department
• Provides evaluation, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries, dysfunction and conditions affecting muscles, bones and joints
• Typical experience includes testing to find the root of the problem and a plan for correction
• Most common ailments treated in physical therapy: back and neck pain; post surgical rehabilitation; sports injuries; repetitive strain injuries; headaches; motor vehicle injuries; chronic dysfunction; and work related injuries
• For UNL students, faculty and staff
• Referral from a physician is required for treatment
• Staffed by two licensed physical therapists
• Services covered 100 percent by the UNL student insurance plan; also a Blue Cross/Blue Shield preferred provider

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