



Choosing the Right Shoes

Proper footwear for health and safety

Making good choices about which shoes to wear can improve your comfort and safety. Shoes that do not fit well or do not support your feet well may:

- Cause you to be unsteady.
- Lead to falls.
- Increase joint pain in your lower back and legs.

Shoes that fit well and support your feet will:

- Have a strong arch support. You can feel this if you put your hand inside the shoe.
- Have lots of toe room. You want to be able to wiggle your toes inside, but the shoes should not be so loose that your foot slips around inside the shoe.
- Enclose your foot completely. Slip-on shoes go on easily, but they also slip off easily. Slip-ons are usually looser and provide less support than shoes that lace up, as long as you tie the laces.
- Have non-slip soles. Leather soles are more slippery than rubber ones.
- Have thinner soles. Thick sneakers or shoes with sneaker-style soles make it harder for your body to feel unstable surfaces. The deep treads can also get caught on things.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

For appointments, call between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday:

8-East Physical Therapy:
206-598-4830

Roosevelt Exercise Training Center:
206-598-2888

Appointments are scheduled daily between 8:15 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Follow These Guidelines

- Wear shoes indoors as well as outdoors. Research done by the National Institute of Aging shows that the risk of falling is 11 times higher when one is wearing slippers or is barefoot.
- Put shoes next to your bed. If you need to get up in the middle of the night, they will be handy for you.
- Get comfortable and safe shoes. Shoes that don't fit well or are worn out will not support your feet or provide the same health and safety benefits.

Special Issues

Bunions

If you have bunions, choose orthopedic shoes with a large toe-box. Avoid sandals, which may increase the problem.

Diabetes

Wear clean cotton socks with shoes that fit well. Medicare will pay for diabetic footwear, which you can find at an orthopedic shoe store. It is also important to inspect your feet every day for any irritation.

Notes

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