

Foot & Ankle Injuries in the Workplace



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Types of Workplace Injuries

- Acute
 - Falling items
 - Tripping/falling
- Chronic
 - Develops over time

Chronic Foot Problems in the Workplace

- Plantar Fasciitis (with or without heel spurs)
- Stress fracture
- Posterior tibial tendon dysfunction (PTTD)

Plantar Fasciitis

- Most common cause of heel pain in adults
- Inflammation of the plantar fascia
- Typically due to repetitive or excessive stress on the foot
 - Too much standing or walking

Plantar Fasciitis: Symptoms

- Gradual onset of pain
 - Bottom of the heel, underneath your arch or in both areas
- Worse with first steps in the morning or when standing after prolonged sitting
- Can develop heel spurs

Treatment Options for Plantar Fasciitis

Conservative (non-surgical) treatment:

- Shoe inserts or custom orthotics
- Stretching exercises
- Appropriate footwear
- NSAIDs, such as ibuprofen
- Rest & ice
- Other (physical therapy, injections, etc.)

Surgical treatment

- May be necessary if conservative treatment doesn't work

Stress Fractures in the Foot

- Hairline break in the bone
- Often caused by overuse or doing too much too soon
- Can lead to a complete break if untreated
- At risk if you've started a new job where you're standing/walking more

Stress Fractures: Symptoms

- Pain at the site
- Sometimes:
 - Swelling
 - Redness
 - Bruising

Treatment for Stress Fractures

- Start treatment as soon as possible
- Treatment options
 - Resting the foot
 - Immobilization (cast, walking boot)
 - Surgery

Posterior Tibial Tendon Dysfunction (PTTD)

- Too much stress can worsen PTTD
- PTTD causes changes in the tendon
 - Impairs the ability to support the arch
 - The foot flattens
- Also called “adult-acquired flatfoot”

PTTD: Symptoms

- Pain
- Swelling
- Flattening of the arch
- As PTTD advances, pain can shift to the outside of foot

Treatment Options for PTTD

- Orthotics or bracing
- Immobilization (cast or walking boot)
- Physical Therapy
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
- Shoe modifications
- Surgery for some advanced cases

Can you prevent or reduce these problems?

It's all about your footwear!



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What is the Right Footwear?

There are 3 keys to keep in mind

Key #1: Supportive Shoes

- Stiff soles
- Good arch support

Key #2: Slip-Resistant Soles

- Avoid slips, skids and falls

Key #3: Avoid Open-Type Shoes

- Don't wear sandals or other open footwear

Take Good Care of Your Feet at Work!

Next Step Foot & Ankle Clinic

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