



## Toolbox Talk: The Importance of Proper Footwear

### Introduction/Overview:

Many slips, trips, and falls result from a combination of risk factors, including footwear worn at the time of the accident. Sometimes the walking-working surfaces are at fault, but footwear plays an integral part in walking and standing. Proper footwear also plays an essential role in foot health and the health of the body overall.

One of the health risks associated with wearing improper shoes include [plantar fasciitis](#). This condition is caused by inflammation of the connective tissue between the heel and toes. This condition results in immense pain. Shoes that provide poor foot support may cause knee, hip, and ankle problems. Some styles of shoes like flip-flops may cause poor posture and back problems. Even foot fractures may occur if you wear shoes that do not provide support while engaging in activities like running.

### Statistics:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), around [300,000](#) older people are admitted to a hospital for hip fractures every year. In addition, falls are also the most common cause of traumatic brain injury (TBI).

### Talking Points:

Some shoe styles increase the probability of falling and developing shoe-related medical problems. Two of these styles include flip-flops and house slippers. Neither gives the proper foot support that shoes should provide. [Good shoes](#) should have the following qualities:

- A thick sole (replace as necessary).
- Heel straps.
- Deep so the heel will be held in the shoe.
- The shoe material should be stiff enough to give good ankle support.
- The shoes should provide wiggle room for the toes.
- Support cushions (some support cushions will compress soon after wearing and become ineffective).
- Soles should be designed for the walking surface (wet, oily, snow, ice, and tile).
- New shoes should be comfortable from the start.
- The shoe should be the proper size (have your feet measured).

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**Additional Discussion Notes:**

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**Final Thoughts:**

You should always buy suitable quality footwear and replace it as necessary. When purchasing, keep in mind how and when you will wear the footwear. Careful thought and consideration should always go into selecting footwear.

**NOTE:** Always promote discussion with the attendees. If a question comes up that no one in attendance can answer, please contact DHRM/OWC/Loss Control Consultants for assistance.

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**References:**

Proper shoe information

<https://saveourbones.com/these-shoes-greatly-increase-your-chances-of-falling/>

Fall statistics

<https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/adultfalls.html>

What makes a good shoe?

<https://thesupportiveorthotist.com/what-makes-a-good-shoe/>

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