

FITNESS

Safe Workouts Start With the Right Shoes

NewsUSA

(NU) - You've joined a gym and your exercise program is all planned out. Now you're ready to hit the treadmill, right?

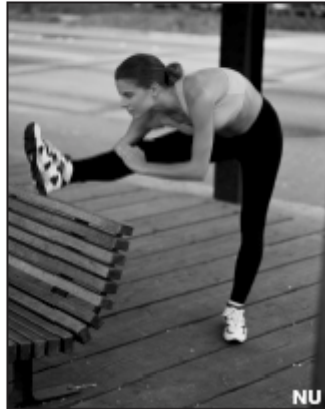
Not if you don't have the correct athletic shoes, warns the American Podiatric Medical Association. Choosing the proper athletic shoes can go a long way toward preventing many foot-related injuries. Your shoes should fit well and provide you with sufficient protection, and they should be appropriate for your particular activity.

"When buying running shoes, you should have a thumb's width of room at the end of the toe when standing to provide ample room for your feet," said Dr. Jane Andersen, an APMA member. "Runners should replace sneakers every 300 to 500 miles."

Accordingly, walkers should replace their shoes every six months, and the general, non-exercising public should trade in their sneakers at least once a year, Andersen said.

Athletic shoes generally come in three categories. "Motion control" shoes are usually suited for people with low-arched, straight feet. "Stability" shoes are for those with medium-arched feet that have a slight curve. "Neutral" shoes best fit those with high-arched feet.

The APMA offers these tips to



Podiatrists say you should not begin working out until you have the proper athletic shoes.

help you select the best athletic shoes for your feet.

- Don't rely on your last pair of shoes as a barometer of size. A shoe's model can change and feet can get larger and wider over time, so get your feet measured when you're in the store.

- Try on the shoes at the end of the day, when feet are at their largest due to standing and walking from place to place. Bring the socks that you intend to wear with the shoes to ensure a proper fit.

For more information on foot care, visit the APMA Web site at www.apma.org.