



Staying in Touch

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Hello -

Many of the physical conditions massage therapists see are problems commonly brought on by the way the person uses his or her body every day.

This issue features information to help you discover ways to avoid some of those nagging aches and pains.

Really listening to what your body has to say to you can help you determine what areas of your health may need attention and feet are no exception.

Try to stay aware of any physical changes or discomforts and ask yourself what may be contributing to the cause. You may spot areas you need to change so you can feel your best.

Investing a little time each day in your own well-being should pay you big returns in future happiness, so take care of yourself!

Coming soon.....

Natural Lift Facial Massage

- A face lift without surgery incorporates a unique blend of highly effective techniques from Indian Face Massage, Japanese Facial Massage, and also Acupressure for the face.

What is Pronation

Learn how to identify Pronation and Supination and then choose the right shoes to support your foot type. In this issue we are going to look at some common foot problems that not only affect athletes, but also affect the general population.

The two conditions we are going to concentrate on in this issue are pronation and supination. These two terms refer to a foot's natural rolling movement while walking or running. This motion is sometimes called the running gait, and is described at the New Balance web site as...

"A unique set of actions and reactions that your foot performs while in motion to support, cushion and balance your body."

If you suffer from pronation or supination, or are seeking to prevent its occurrence it is important to follow the information in this article. In addition, making stretching a part of your fitness regime will have a significant impact.

What is Pronation?

Pronation refers to the inward roll of the foot during normal motion and occurs as the outer edge of the heel strikes the ground and the foot rolls inward and flattens out. A moderate amount of pronation is required for the foot to function properly, however damage and injury can occur during excessive pronation. When excessive pronation does occur the foot arch flattens out and stretches the muscles, tendons and ligaments underneath the foot.



The picture to the left (used from steenwyk.com web site) shows a view of the right foot as if looking at it from behind.

As you can see in the picture the ankle is over pronating or rolling inwardly.

What is Supination?

Supination is the opposite of pronation and

and Supination?

normal motion. A natural amount of supination occurs during the push-off phase of the running gait as the heel lifts off the ground and the forefoot and toes are used to propel the body forward. However, excessive supination (outward rolling) places a large strain on the muscles and tendons that stabilize the ankle, and can lead to the ankle rolling completely over, resulting in an ankle sprain or total ligament rupture.

This time, (used from steenwyk.com web site), the foot is over supinating or rolling outwardly.



Symptoms
Excessive pronation and supination can cause a number of ailments that affect the foot, ankle, knees,

hips and back. Some of the more common symptoms of excessive pronation and supination are listed below:

- Arch pain
- Flat feet
- Ankle sprains
- Achilles tendonitis
- Hip pain
- Heel pain
- Corns and calluses
- Shin Splints
- Knee pain
- Back pain

Prevention and Treatment

Pronation and supination are bio-mechanical problems, and are best treated and prevented with orthotic inserts. But before you run out to buy orthotics it makes sense to get the right advice on footwear, and the best advice I can give you, is to go and see a qualified podiatrist for a complete foot-strike and running gait analysis. They will be able to tell you if there are any concerns regarding the way your running gait is functioning. After your running gait has been analysed, have your podiatrist, or competent sports footwear sales person recommend a number of shoes that suit your requirements. Good quality footwear will go a long way in helping to prevent pronation and supination.



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Addressing the cause of cold feet.

Q: My left foot is cold almost all the time. The doctors I've seen have ruled out nerve problems and I'm at a complete loss. What can I do?

Dr. Wright: You said that nerve-related problems have been ruled out, but you didn't mention whether or not your circulation had been tested. If not, that could be contributing to the problem, in which case the best place to start would be to work on improving blood flow to your extremities.

You may want to consider trying 800IU of vitamin E daily, in the form of "mixed tocopherols", which are a more potent form of regular vitamin E.

Inositol hexaniacinate (a combination of two B vitamins) may also be useful. Inositol hexaniacinate can safely dilate blood vessels, which will improve the circulation to the extremities and possibly help "warm" your foot. Try taking 500 to 600mg twice a day. Occasionally too much inositol hexaniacinate can cause nausea. If you find this happens to you, you should discontinue using it.

Finally, it's always a good idea to take a high-potency multiple vitamin and mineral combination on a daily basis to "back up" any individual vitamins you might decide to take. Keep in mind, as well, that it can take up to three months for these nutrients to produce significant, noticeable results.

What is Pronation and Supination? (continued from Page 1)

And, if needed, invest in a pair of orthotic inserts to further prevent excessive pronation or supination.

Choosing the right shoes

That brings us to the next point. What should you be looking for when purchasing a new pair of shoes?

1. Choose a shoe that suits your running gait and foot type. Money spent at the podiatrist now, for a complete foot-strike and running gait analysis, will save you much heart-ache and discomfort later. Having a shoe that suits your foot type is the best prevention for injury and pain.
2. When having your shoes fitted have both feet measured to ensure you get the most appropriate size, and remember, your feet are three dimensional. The length of your foot is only one part of a proper fitting, measure your feet for width and depth to get a better fit.
3. When purchasing footwear make your purchase in the later half of the day. Your feet will swell during the normal course of a day, so avoid making a purchase in the morning as you may find that your new shoes are half a size too small by the afternoon.
4. When trying on new shoes always wear the socks that you will be using with your new shoes.
5. Never purchase tight fitting shoes in the hope that they will stretch or wear-in over time.

Apart from good shoes and orthotic inserts, what else can you do?

Firstly, a thorough and correct warm up will help to prepare the muscles and tendons for any activity or sport. Without a proper warm up the muscles and tendons around your feet, ankles and lower legs will be tight and stiff. There will be limited blood flow to the lower legs, which will result in a lack of oxygen and nutrients for those muscles. Secondly, flexible muscles are extremely important in the prevention of most ankle and lower leg injuries. When muscles and tendons are flexible and supple, they are able to move and perform without being over stretched. If however, your muscles and tendons are tight and stiff, it is quite easy for those muscles and tendons to be pushed beyond their natural range of movement. To keep your muscles and tendons flexible and supple, it is important to undertake a structured stretching routine. And thirdly, strengthening and conditioning the muscles of the lower leg will also help to prevent ankle and lower leg injuries.

Foot Hygiene Routine:

1. Wash feet every night in warm soapy water to get rid of daily grime. Washing at night and keeping them well moisturised is the key to healthy feet.
2. Dip feet in bowl of warm water and soak for 20 minutes.
3. Rub any hard areas with a pumice stone or foot file.
4. For a soothing treatment, try adding a couple of drops of an essential oil to the water. Lavender is good for softening hard skin, while peppermint is the one to go for if tired feet are getting you down. Cypress, rosemary and tea tree oil can counteract excessive perspiration.
5. After soaking feet, rinse them well and dry thoroughly, especially between the toes, to lower your risk of fungal infections such as athlete's foot.
6. Cuticles tend to soften naturally in water, so push them back, using the towel as you dry.
7. A generous dollop of moisturiser to finish will help keep feet soft and supple.
8. If you have dry, chapped skin on the heels of the feet – instead of rubbing some moisturiser into your feet, massage some castor oil all over the feet. Then put a pair of clean, old socks on – this is because castor oil stains. Go to bed with your socks on. You will find that because castor oil is a liquid this can move to all the cracks quite easily whereas the moisturiser just sits in the cracks. Castor oil has been used for centuries for various ailments and has many healing properties.
9. Do this routine at least twice a week where possible.

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