Footwear Checklist

The most important features to look for in a shoe before fitting them is that they are flat, have a fastening mechanism and are wide enough in the toe area. Once you have chosen a shoe, the following steps should be taken to ensure they fit properly. The podiatrist will go through each of the checks with you before you go to purchase a pair of shoes.

1: Check the inside of the shoe for any seams or stitching that may rub or dig into your foot. This is best done by running your hand around the inside of the shoe. Shoes with decorative or bulky seams or stitching are best avoided.

2: Make sure your heel is in the back of the shoe. If need be, get someone to pull firmly on the shoe while you are sitting to ensure no heel slippage.

3: Check the width of the shoe across the balls of your feet. There should be no pressure on your little or great toe.

4: Check the depth of the shoes. You should be able to see a ripple in the leather when you rub your thumb across the top of the shoe.

5: Check the length of the shoes. There should be around 1 cm or a thumbs width between the end of the great toe and the end of the shoe.

6: Make sure that the shoe is cradling the arch.

7: The anklebones must be clear of the topline of the shoe. Make sure that the shoe is fitting snugly around the heel.

8: When purchasing shoes with laces, there must be a minimum of a 6mm facing gap. If there is not this width, then as the leather stretches you do not have the means to do the shoe up tighter.

9: Finally, you should walk around the shop in your shoes. Your feet spread a little during walking and standing, so shoes that feel comfortable when sitting may not feel so when walking. Also be aware that at different times of the day your feet are more swollen. As such it is best to try on the shoes when the feet are at their most swollen, usually in the afternoon. Remember that there is no such thing as “wearing in” shoes – they should be comfortable from the moment that you put them on.