



St. Michael's House

Services for people with intellectual disabilities

Physiotherapy Department

Footwear advice

Supportive and appropriately fitting footwear is essential to support our feet and joints. Inappropriate footwear can lead to pain, foot deformities, and an increased falls risk. Below are some tips and advice to consider when choosing your footwear. This applies to all types of footwear.

What to look for when purchasing shoes:

Footwear should be strong, supportive and lightweight.

Your footwear should have a firm heel counter that doesn't collapse easily when you press on it. This helps provide support and stability to the foot and ankle.



Ensure that the shoes have sufficient grip on the bottom of the sole. If the sole is smooth it can make it easier for slips & falls.



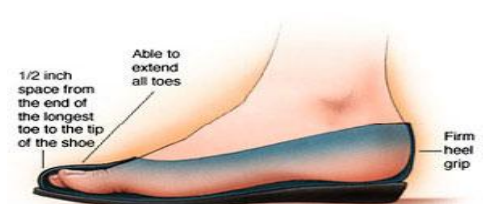
The mid-sole of the shoe should be supportive. You should not be able to twist them like this.



It is important that your footwear is the correct fit - this helps prevent pain and deformities.

Incorrect fitting shoes can increase your falls risk.

If you are unsure what size you need, ask to have your feet measured at your local shoe/sports shop.



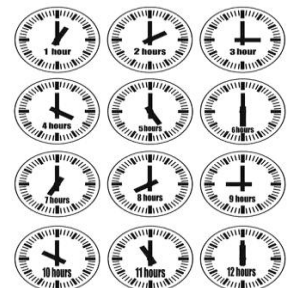


When buying footwear that insoles or a splint must fit into, pick footwear with a deeper toe box (see where the red arrow is in the photo). You will need a shoe size at least a half size if not a full size larger than normal. Always bring your insoles/splint with you to shop when buying new shoes and remove the new shoes inner sole so your new insoles can fit in.

Ideally get footwear with laces – If you cannot tie laces then shoe laces can be replaced with elasticised laces or 'lock laces'. You can purchase these in sport shops or online through a Google search. If you are not getting shoes with laces or lock laces then Velcro fastening shoes is the next best option. Slip on shoes should be a last resort – These must fit snugly.



When you get new footwear you should take some time to 'wear them in'. Slowly build up your time wearing them by approximately one hour per day. This can help prevent any discomfort or marking on your feet.



If you have any concerns or would like more information regarding your feet and footwear, please contact the St.Michael's House Physiotherapy Department.

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