

Foot Facts

Runners: Save Your Feet—And Your Money

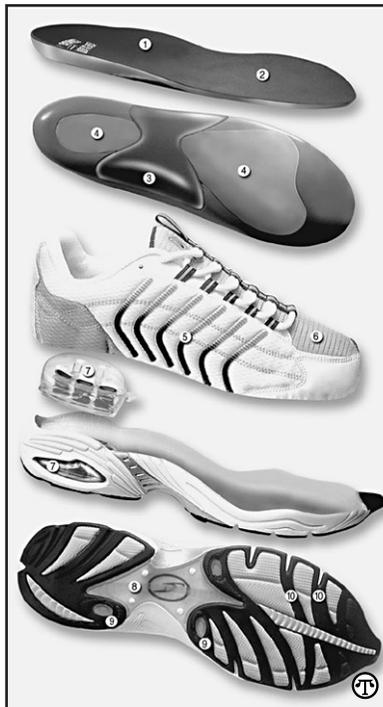
(NAPSA)—What absorbs 300 tons of force in a three-mile run? Your feet. So, with 80 percent of Americans experiencing some type of foot ailment in their lifetimes, finding top-quality running shoes at an affordable price is key. You don't have to pay a fortune to protect your feet, however. In fact, if you're spending more than \$40 on running shoes, you may be spending too much.

"It's a myth that the higher the price, the better the shoe will feel on your feet," says Lisa Hanly, brand director for Brown Shoe Company, makers of Dr. Scholl's Shoes. "The human foot is a biological masterpiece made up of more than 185 parts, including 26 bones, 33 joints, 19 muscles and 107 ligaments. Multiply that by two, and the potential for injuring any given part becomes clear. That's why it's important for runners to find—not the most expensive shoe—but the shoe that best meets their needs."

Hanly offers these simple steps for finding the right running shoe:

- **Buy a running shoe.** Sounds obvious, but many Americans injure their feet by running in basketball or tennis shoes. Look specifically for running shoes that offer cushioning—air soles are preferable—and traction.

- **Look inside.** Make sure the insole has a deep heel cup and contoured arch support. These elements offer additional motion control and improved stability that reduce "overpronation," or the inward rolling of the feet, causing undue stress. Also, see if the shoe has an antimicrobially treated



These features make a great running shoe:

1. Deep-heel cup and contoured arch reduce overpronation
2. Antimicrobially treated topcloth kills odors
3. Butterfly arch cradle provides gentle arch support
4. Energy return system provides enhanced efficiency
5. Supportive stripes add motion stability
6. Breathable mesh uppers enhance comfort
7. Air-pocket system absorbs shock
8. Molded stabilizer adds strength
9. Landing pads made of high-mileage abrasion rubber add long life
10. Lateral and medial flex notches add independent flexibility



topcloth to kill odor-causing fungus and bacteria on the insole.

- **Look outside.** Does the shoe have supportive elements for added motion stability? Do the uppers feature mesh for breathability? Are there reflective accents for your safety, necessary when running at night?

- **Look underneath.** Air-pocket systems are best at absorbing shock and adding cushioned support. Make sure the sole has lateral and medial flex notches that add independent flexibility. See if the front and back landing pads are made of high-mileage abrasion rubber, connected by a tough molded stabilizer between them.

Wearing shoes that fit properly can help you avoid such problems as lower back pain, shin splints, heel spurs, ankle sprains and stress fractures. With so much riding on your shoes, doesn't it make sense to seek out the most expensive shoe possible?

"Not really," says Hanly. "There are some fine running shoes with all of the features listed above for less than \$40—for example, the new Dr. Scholl's Advantage Sport shoes for men and women now available at about 700 U.S. Wal-Mart stores. Remember, it's not where you buy the shoe, or how much it costs, but how well the shoe feels on your feet."

One final note: Good-fitting running shoes are great for everyday wear, as well.