

## Tennis And Your Feet: Don't "Court" Disaster

(NAPSA)—Tennis provides a total aerobic body workout, and regular play is a relatively safe and enjoyable way to stay fit. It doesn't take a superior athlete to have fun playing tennis, but care must always be taken to avoid injuries to muscles not vigorously exercised off the tennis court.

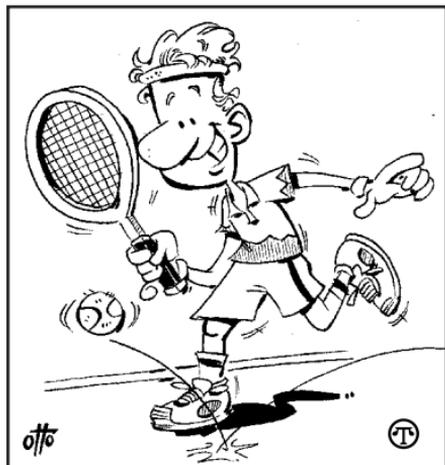
This is especially true of the foot and ankle, which are put under considerable stress by the continuous side-to-side motion and quick stopping and starting the sport requires. Different court surfaces also stress the foot and ankle in different ways.

### Selecting the right shoes

Shoes should be specifically designed for tennis. Unlike running shoes, proper tennis shoes "give" enough to allow for side-to-side sliding. Running shoes have too much traction and may cause injury. In addition, running shoes don't have padded toe boxes, which leads to toe injuries for tennis players.

Heels should be snug-fitting to prevent slipping from side to side, and both heel and toe areas should have adequate cushioning. The arch should provide soft support and the toe box should have adequate depth to prevent toenail injuries.

Shop for tennis shoes in the afternoon, when the feet swell slightly. Try on several pairs, with tennis socks. Put on and lace both shoes and walk around for a minute or two. Make sure your ankles don't roll in the shoes.



**The right shoes can help protect your feet and prevent injury during tennis matches.**

### An ounce of prevention

It's a good idea to have your feet and ankles evaluated by a professional foot care specialist before taking to the court. Your podiatrist can check for excessive pronation or supination (turning inward or outward of the ankles), and if necessary prescribe a custom orthotic device for insertion in the shoe to correct the imbalance.

Injuries on the tennis court range from simple (ankle sprains, corns, calluses, blisters) to serious (plantar fasciitis, tennis toe, stress fractures, shin splints). All of these can be treated by a podiatric physician.

For more foot health information, call 1-800-FOOTCARE or visit the American Podiatric Medicine Association Web site at [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org).