

Following a few simple guidelines can help to reduce foot problems in the workplace.

EMPLOYERS

As an employer you can prevent foot problems at work by:

- ▶ Promoting foot health in your workplace, especially during Foot Health Week (2nd week in October).
- ▶ Contracting a podiatrist to give a talk on foot care to employees.
- ▶ Encouraging your staff members to report foot problems, however minor (e.g. safety shoes that rub).
- ▶ Looking at the foot health record of your company – multiple foot complaints may suggest the workplace itself is creating foot problems.
- ▶ Doing a ‘Foot Risk Assessment’ in the work place – look for ways to minimize the burden on your employees’ feet. (A podiatrist may be able to assist you with assessing workplace foot risks.)
- ▶ Emphasizing to the safety officer or occupational physician that foot complaints should be taken seriously.
- ▶ If your employees wear safety shoes, ask yourself: Do we stock an adequate range of safety shoes to suit every staff member? If not, out-sourcing the supply and fit of safety shoes may be more cost-effective.
- ▶ Allowing employees a crossover period when they exchange their old safety shoes for a new pair.

EMPLOYEES

Workplace Foot Care

As an employee, you can maintain your foot health by:

- ▶ Being aware of the hazards in your workplace. If you have concerns about foot safety, alert your workplace representative or your employer.
- ▶ Reporting any foot pain or discomfort to your employer or safety officer.
- ▶ Making sure your shoes fit properly and that you wear appropriate shoes for your workplace (e.g. safety shoes if applicable).
- ▶ Remembering – feet shouldn't hurt. Sore feet are a sign of a problem.
- ▶ Visiting a podiatrist if you have foot problems.

Refer to your Yellow Pages™ for podiatrists who are members of the Australasian Podiatry Council.

Many health funds in Australia and New Zealand provide cover on their ancillary tables and government funded services are available through the Department of Veterans' Affairs, some public hospitals and community health centres.



PODIATRY

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