

Summer shoes can mean more wear and tear on your feet

Orthopedic surgeon **Nicole Arcand, MD**, said it is important to take good care of your feet during the summer.

Sandals and flip flops are fine for short periods, she said, but people should use common sense and not wear them for long periods of time, like all day at work or walking in the mall or on the beach, because they don't provide enough support.

Improper footwear can lead to plantar fasciitis, Achilles tendinitis and even stress fractures, she said. Plantar fasciitis is when a ligament along the bottom of the foot develops tears in the tissue, resulting in pain and inflammation near the heel bone. The Achilles tendon is a large band of tissue connecting the muscles in the back of the lower leg to the heel bone and is used when you walk, run, jump or push up on your toes. Achilles tendinitis, or inflammation of the tendon, is caused by repetitive or intense strain on the tendon.

Dr. Arcand said everyone should check their feet often, but especially people with diabetes or those with poor sensation should avoid going barefoot and keep their feet dry, to avoid getting cuts or fungal infections. She advises drying between the toes after swimming as well.

"Try to enjoy summer and stay active. Swimming and biking are good activities for people with foot and ankle problems, because they don't put a lot of pressure or stress on the joints," she said.

Dr. Arcand is a member of the Backus Medical Staff and the Norwich Orthopedic Group. She is fellowship-trained in foot and ankle orthopedics.

[\(William W. Backus Hospital Publication Healthy Connections - August 2011\)](#)