# Stay On Your Feet...

## Step 4: Foot Care and Safe Footwear

Managing your shoes and feet is an important part of preventing falls. Unsafe footwear or common foot problems such as corns, calluses or ingrown toe nails can upset your balance and even change your walk. You can see different foot care specialists for your foot care needs such as podiatrists, chiropodists or a foot care nurse.

### Ways to look after your feet:

- See a foot care specialist to have your feet checked out, nails cut and corns cared for.
- Do foot exercises to maintain good circulation in your feet, ankles and legs. Ask a physiotherapist for advice.
- Consult your health care provider if you have any foot pain.
- Try a foot massage.
- Pamper yourself! Wash and dry your feet well. Rub with moisturizer but not between the toes and wipe off any excess.

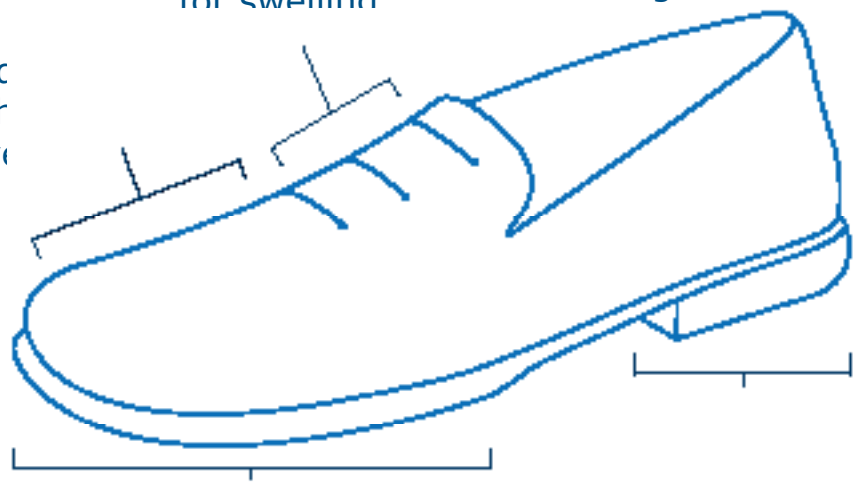
### Check your shoes for these features:

- **A good fit** gives you a safe walking pattern and proper balance.
- **Laces or Velcro** are the best choices. If you have trouble tying laces, look for special aids at pharmacies to help you.
- **Lots of contact with the ground** gives your feet stability. Wear flat shoes with low, broad heels.
- **A sole with a good grip.** A good grip depends on the material used, the pattern in the sole or both. A shoe repairer may be able to add grips to your current footwear.
- **A rounded or beveled edge at the heel.** This increases the contact area and grip at the heel, making it safer.
- **A thin, firm mid sole.** These are more stable than soft soles, unless your health care provider or foot care specialist have advised you otherwise.
- **Back of the shoe that covers the heel** to provide support and prevent slipping.

Source: SOYF WA®
Revised 02/2017

*(over)*

## The ideal shoe




Picture provided with permission by: Finding Balance Alberta

## Generally, unsafe footwear includes:

- High or narrow heels
- Slippery or worn heels
- Soft or stretched uppers
- Slip-on shoes or slippers
- Worn, loose or ill-fitting shoes
- Heavy shoes
- Socks

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# What am I doing to care for my feet? Is my footwear safe?

**Review your current foot care routine and your footwear. Complete the table below. An example is given to help.**

| What positive steps am I already taking? | What changes might help me stay on my feet? | How will I make these changes? Is there anyone I need to contact? | When will I make these changes? |
|---|---|---|---|
| I see a foot care specialist once a year. | I am going to use the footwear features listed in this handout to see if my shoes are safe. | I will purchase shoes with these features. | I will look at shoes when I go to the mall on Wednesday. |

**Who else do you know who would benefit from this information?**

## Stay Active, Stay Independent and Stay On Your Feet!

For more information about risk factors for falls or local falls prevention programs, contact your local health unit.
**www.stayonyourfeet.ca**

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