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### The Verdict on Flip Flops



Flip flops—an iconic symbol of summer—are oh-so-easy to get in the habit of wearing. Just slip them on and go! However, too much time spent in these seasonal favorites can lead to painful foot problems. What are the pros and cons of these popular shoes?

**Thumbs Up:** Flip flops can play a particularly important part in protecting your feet in some summer scenarios. Anytime you're in a public place where people tend to walk barefoot—the town pool, seaside changing area or restrooms, gym showers, nail salon—wearing flip flops can keep your feet from coming in contact with fungi, bacteria, and viruses. Common foot infections like fungal toenails, warts, and athlete's foot are all spread by direct contact. Flip flops can easily and conveniently keep your feet covered. Flip flops are also good to wear on beach days to prevent severe burns from steaming pavement and searing hot sand.

**Thumbs Down:** It's not all fun and games if you wear flip flops for sports or any type of physical activity. Running, jumping, and even brisk walking can all lead to an ankle-twisting injury if you are wearing flip flops due to the complete lack of side structure to hold your foot in place. You're also more likely to get a cut or scrape because the skin on your feet is completely exposed. Also, an extended time spent in flip flops can result in several podiatric issues. Long term usage is associated with an increased risk of plantar fasciitis because of the lack of arch support. A flat foot puts excess strain on the plantar fascia, which in turn can leave your arches and heels hurting. Many wearers also experience heel pain from the lack of padding between the heel and the ground. Friction between the rubber toe separator and your skin caused by perspiration can cause blisters as well. Finally, if flip flops are your daily go-to, the constant gripping with your toes on the front of the shoe to keep them on can accelerate the development of a hammertoe deformity.

So, while convenient and helpful in a few specific situations, flip flops should not be your everyday summer footwear. If you are attached to this type of shoe, at least look for manufacturers who have redesigned flip flops, adding features to improve the structure, support, and cushioning and decrease the potential for foot problems.

### 5 Tips for Getting the Right Walking/Running Shoes



One change triggered by the pandemic that may become permanent is a return to walking and running as fitness activities of choice. Walking and running have several advantages. They can be done while maintaining a safe social distance. They don't rely on a gym and can be done outdoors or indoors using a treadmill. Running and walking also don't require much in the way of equipment. The one item you must have, however, is a good pair of shoes to keep your feet safe and prevent common podiatric disorders and injuries. Below are some tips for getting the best pair for your feet.

1. **Start with a podiatric checkup.** Your podiatrist will do a complete examination of your feet and ankles and update your medical history. If you have a chronic foot disorder such as heel spurs, weak ankles, or hammertoes, the foot doctor will be able to advise you on shoe styles that will best accommodate your problem. In some cases, a custom orthotic may be prescribed to improve comfort and performance.
2. **Shop at an athletic shoe store.** Shoe stores that specialize in fitness footwear are more likely to be able to help you find a good walking or running shoe. Get both feet measured—too many people are currently wearing shoes that are too small for their feet. Be sure to tell the salesperson if you have any foot problems, such as overpronation, plantar fasciitis, etc. Many stores of this type will have a treadmill that you can walk on to analyze your gait and further help in choosing a shoe that will work well with your feet.
3. **Time your trip.** It's always best to shop at the end of the day because that's when your feet are largest and most swollen. Bring the type of socks you will plan to wear when you walk or run to try on with shoes you are considering, and don't forget your orthotic if you have one.
4. **Look for key design features.** Running shoes should be lightweight and breathable. They should also be constructed with a shock-absorbing sole, good cushioning on the insole, and adequate ankle and arch support. Flexibility in the ball of the foot is also important. Be sure to try on both shoes and spend enough time walking/running in the store to determine that they are comfortable.
5. **Know when it's time to replace your shoes.** Inspect your shoes periodically for signs of wear. Stretched out heels, wear on the soles, tears in the fabric, and the ability to bend the shoe completely in half are all signs that it's time for a new pair. Even if your shoes still look fine, however, keep in mind that interior elements can be deteriorated. A good rule to follow: replace walking/running shoes every 300-500 miles.

### Recipe of the Month Chicken and Bulgur Salad with Peaches



Fresh, seasonal, and light, this is a great meal for summer appetites. Bulgur, a quick-cooking whole grain, is perfect for time-crunched weeknight cooking. You can also substitute quinoa or whole-wheat couscous.

#### Ingredients

- 1 1/3 cups water
- 2/3 cup bulgur
- Cooking spray
- 1-pound chicken breast cutlets
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 cups packed arugula
- 2 cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 2 cups sliced fresh peaches
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar

#### How to Make It

1. Bring 1 1/3 cups water and bulgur to a boil in a small saucepan over high. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and simmer 10 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water. Drain well; let dry on paper towels.
2. Meanwhile, heat a grill pan coated with cooking spray over high. Sprinkle chicken with 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper. Grill chicken, turning occasionally, until done, 6 to 7 minutes. Remove to a cutting board. Let stand 3 minutes. Slice against the grain into strips.
3. Place bulgur, arugula, tomatoes, and peaches in a large bowl. Add remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt, oil, and vinegar; toss to coat. Divide mixture among 4 plates; top evenly with chicken.

Recipe courtesy of [CookingLight.com](http://CookingLight.com)

### History FootNote

An astronaut's footprint can last a million years on the surface of the moon. It may have been decades since we last set a foot on the moon, but its surface is still marked with the historic footprints of the 12 astronauts who stomped across it. That's because the moon has no atmosphere.

### Foot Funnies

Who always goes to bed with his shoes on?  
A horse!

### Celebrity Foot Focus - Socks and Crocs

Celebrities and footwear trends are mutually exclusive. Lately, celebrities have embraced the ugly gardening shoe that soared in popularity in the 2000's. Ariana Grande recently donned a white pair of Crocs along with white lace ankle socks. Grande has over 164 million Instagram followers and is no doubt a trendsetter. Since posting selfies of herself in the rubber shoes, she has generated more than 3 million likes.

Justin Bieber has also been known to wear the brand and Post Malone has taken it a step further by starting his own collection with Crocs which quickly sold out. He also gives a shout out to the brand in his song "I'm Gonna Be."

It's no doubt that celebrities may have kickstarted the latest Crocs revival!

### Trivia

Which can be a symptom of athlete's foot?

- A. Itching or burning on skin of feet
- B. Rash on feet
- C. Blisters on feet
- D. Thick or crumbling toenails
- E. All of the above

Answer: E. All of the above.

The affected area may also develop cracks in the skin or inflammation. The primary site on the foot for this infection is between the toes, but it may also occur on the heels. The infection may also affect the palms and fingernails.

### Meet Our Doctor



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