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# AVOIDING KNEE PAIN

THE OLD SAYING, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” certainly holds true for avoiding potential knee problems.

Many knee problems start at your body’s foundation, the feet. You may have a condition called pronation which is a collapsing of the feet. Individuals at the greatest risk are those with the following physical attributes:

- Knock knees
- Flat feet
- Turned-in ankles

Individuals suffering with moderate to severe pronation may experience the following symptoms during the course of the day, or during extended exercise.

- Tired, achy feet
- Tired calves
- Pain of the inside aspect of the knee.

**Children at Risk**

If you notice that your child does not want to participate in physical activities, don’t automatically attribute it to laziness, it may be a sign of pronation syndrome which causes their legs and feet to ache. Lack of physical activity can lead to:

- Weight problems
- Non-participation in extra-curricular activities.

Visiting a podiatrist at age 3-4 provides a great opportunity to identify problems early. Starting early means that your child



will have a much better chance to participate in daily activities and sports without problems and will avoid or put off more serious problems in their future.

As a foot and ankle specialist, I see many patients in their 50’s and 60’s with developed pronation syndrome that was not treated; resulting in serious knee problems; and in many cases require total knee surgery and implants. Surgery and pain could have been avoided if the problem was caught earlier when the patient first noticed the symptoms and was aware that the foot imbalance over a lifetime results in worn out knee cartridge and often requires knee surgery. Early detection of deformities of the feet is essential. Many parents are nervous about investing in a doctor visit at an early age, fearing that the child will “outgrow” their expensive orthotics as quickly as they do their shoes. This is not the case. Orthotics usually “fit” in growing children for twelve to twenty-four months.

	Treats	Lifespan	Uses	Price
Generic Insoles	Mild – Moderate	12 months	Athletic Shoes	\$25 – \$50 per pair
FABS	Mild – Severe	3-6 months	Athletic Shoes, Sandals, Heels, Bare Feet	\$30 – \$40
Custom Orthotics	Moderate – Severe	5 years +	Athletic Shoes, Dress Shoes	\$350 – \$750

**Treatment:**

Insoles and orthotics are used to effectively treat pronation syndrome. Many people are unaware of how severe their condition is until they are treated. Individuals wearing glasses are unaware of how severe their vision is impaired until they put on a pair of properly fitting glasses for the first time. As soon as you take the glasses off, you notice the difference and feel impaired without them. In regards to the foot, imagine running in sand... It is impossible to get a strong footing, your feet feel like a bag of loose bones. The orthotics provide you with the required support and offer a feeling similar to running on a track.

**1. Apex insoles.** These are non-custom, pre-made and what I use in my office. This is the least expensive option and is far more superior than any insole that comes with a shoe.

**2. FABS.** I designed and patented this product because as a podiatrist I was dissatisfied with what was available on the market and designed my own product which treats the specific problems associated with plantar fasciitis, heel spurs and general heel pain and pronation syndrome. These can be worn with tennis shoes, sandals, heels or even bare feet.

**3. Custom Orthotics** are precisely casted to your foot and can be made for many types of shoes. These devices are made to last many years and provide the most foot support. Since they are custom, they are made not only to support the foot, but also for many painful conditions like callouses on the ball of the foot. In my office the casts are given back to the patients so that if new orthotics are needed in the future, the old molds may be used which saves the patient money.

Feet are very complex and taking care of them will lead to a more productive life with less orthopedic problems as you age.

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