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The search for running shoes for my difficult feet

Saturday, December 12, 2015

I envy people with "good" feet. DH is one of them. He can grab anything on clearance sale and he's just fine. I'm like the woman in the fairy tale "The Princess and the Pea." Anything that's not quite right causes me discomfort which degenerates into aches and pains. Not that I every let it get that far.

Thanks to my parents, my feet are flat, severely over-pronate and even have an extra bone. I'm not kidding. My right foot is almost one full size smaller than the left. Add an arthritic big toe joint to the mix and finding a new model of shoes is an adventure.

Why change brands/model? Because shoe companies make "improvements" all the time and often they are not an improvement, but an impediment for me.

I wore Brooks Adrenalines for years until suddenly they were slightly narrower. I bet the average consumer didn't even notice, but running in them gave me blisters.

Currently I've been wearing the same model of New Balance for years until suddenly the improvement made them wider. No amount of tightening or thicker socks could keep them from slipping.

I replace my shoes every 500-600 miles which means every 5-6 months and the time is now.

Yesterday, I returned to my favorite running store. Here we go again. They spent a huge amount of time with me, - measuring, watching me walk and run and checking out my "industrial strength" orthotics. I tried on all kinds of possibilities including the Adrenalines, hoping that maybe they were wider again. Nope! They even had 2 sales guys working with me.

Finally, I settled on a brand I've never worn before - Adidas Energy Boost. They are the most comfortable running shoes I've ever tried on. They are also supposed to have the stability I need and they do accommodate my massive orthotics.

Of course, I know that running around in the store isn't a real test. Walking around the house all is fine too, but I have to see what happens with distance. So this week will be spent mostly at the gym on the treadmill, gradually building up from 1 to 5 miles while keeping them clean.

If there is a problem, the store will take them back and we will try again. This brings me to my last point. I always buy local. I want my running store to stay in business and be there when I need them. They pay taxes to support the local economy and also sponsor running events and charities. I want them to employ people who then support their families, pay taxes and support the local economy.

Once they help me find the shoe I need, I never buy online later to save a few bucks. That's a personal choice for me. No judgment here, just an explanation. I'm a very thrifty person. The clearance sale rack is the first place look for clothes.

However, I appreciate all they do to support me and keep me "in the race" and the only way I can show

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my support is with my pocketbook.

I have a LSR (long slow run) planned this morning. I hope this will be the last time for the old shoes.

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KRISSEY82

Wow, that sounds like quite the process! I'm glad you found sneakers, and I hope they are still comfortable!
1999 days ago



SWEETNEEY

Lately, I've been having some challenges with my running shoes. Until earlier this year I was like your husband. But in May I developed blisters while participating in a LSR event. I thought it was the socks. I did another LSR event in June - no problem. Changed shoes - same socks. Then did an event in October - got blisters. Got some new shoes for the November event - no problem but in the December event - did develop blisters and I was wearing some new (and expensive) socks.
2000 days ago



PROVERBS31JULIA

And once you find the shoe that is going to work for you, can you buy a second or third pair just to have "on hand" for when the one pair runs out? Also, curious if the idea of having two pairs of shoes to run in, to switch off ever other day, does it really make the shoes last longer?

I generally buy local but I also know that the Amazon people have a warehouse in our state, so I am charged sales tax as if they had a physical brick-and-mortar building in our area. Kansas not only has state sales tax but then the cities tack their taxes on top, so Amazon knows by zip code how much more or less tax to charge for purchases made in Derby, KS via Amazon, vs purchases in Wichita, KS (about another penny or two for tax in Derby. I've no idea how much more in the various Kansas City metro cities...). That's a thought for "just in case" you can't find a specific shoe in your store?? Sometimes our local store just won't carry my size just because it's not a common size. Or maybe I'm going to the wrong "local store"? Ha. Don't know. The other thing I get is that they won't buy in a certain color because it's "not common" so if I want some wildly exotic color, tough noogies, better order it online. Maybe our area is just jaded and doesn't value customer support. I notice our local running stores seem to be all about helping the young slender runners and consistently ignore us older heavier runners....so I'm glad you've got a good relationship going in your area.
2002 days ago



MARYJEANSL

I agree with you. Any time you have two sales people working hard to help you find exactly what you need, it is a major win, and well worth a few extra dollars to support their store. If you didn't, and bought online, the next time you needed to switch to a different pair, the store and helpful salespeople might no longer be there.
2006 days ago



LIVEDAILY

I love my local running shoe store!! Mind you, I don't run, but my every day shoe is an athletic shoe. I used to wear Brooks, in a wide width, and then the last time I went in, the owner of the store measured my feet, 3 times, as he wanted to make sure, and sure enough, I went up a size!! I'm 59 years old! Surely my feet would've stopped growing by now!! Arch was good, so that hadn't fallen. Anyway, he brought out a pair of New Balance, and they make my feet happy!!
2006 days ago



AQUAGIRL08

I have terribly difficult feet to fit too. I have had three surgeries on the right foot and one on the left. My feet are flat and I over pronate too. I wear hard orthotics and it sure does help! Right now, many of my shoes are Saucony. I am not a runner these days, due to knee and hip issues, but my orthopedist and physical therapists recommended that I go and get fitted for shoes at the local running store. They were great and I have purchased many pairs of shoe from them! I hope that your new shoes work out for you!
2006 days ago



SLENDERELLA61

I noticed when the Brooks Adrenaline got narrower! That's what I was wearing, but the new width made my whole foot go numb, starting with my big bunions, by mile 3. I switched to Saucony Hurricanes, a little more expensive, but worth it for me. I tried going back to Brooks but had the same issue again. So I've now had 5 pairs of Saucony Hurricanes. Hope your Adidas work out for you.



Like you, I appreciate my local running store. They work with me really well. Nice people who sponsor lots of community events including outfitting special needs runners very generously. I would never buy running shoes from anyone else.

Thanks for sharing. Great to know I'm not the only one running on feet that are far from perfect!
2006 days ago



SWEDE_SU

we are exactly the same way with running shoes - and our running store lets us run outside while trying them on. when we leave they remind us that we can come back with them if they don't work out outside. the only time we order online is when we are in molokai, far from our store in seattle (that is "local" for us) and need a replacement. enjoy the new shoes!
2007 days ago



GINIEMIE

For some of the same reasons that you stated, supporting local businesses and the random "improvements" in shoes, I go and get fitted for my shoes every time I buy. I did try to save money once and ended up spending time on trying to return the shoes that were NOT the same as I had had before. NO MORE.
I hope you have a good pair for you. I need the width, but I can rarely get the arch support in the right place.....Reminds me, I'm due for a new pair.



2007 days ago



DOVESEYES

Just finding walking shoes is hard for me so I sympathise with you as I realize running shoes need to be as close to perfect as you can get. Hope your 'trial' goes well and cudos for shopping local.
2007 days ago



PHEBESS

I totally understand how your feet feel! I too have princess and the pea feet. And yes, shoes that once fit suddenly get "improved" - NOT helpful at all.

Glad you found some shoes that feel wonderful - I hope they work out for you!

And yes, if the feet aren't happy, the rest of me isn't happy!
2007 days ago



SUBMOM2

I don't understand why they have to keep "improving" our favorite things! Well, money, I guess. Anyway, enjoy your new shoes!!
2007 days ago



KRISZTA11

I know the problem, even if my feet are not special like yours - so I can imagine how much time it took to find the Right Shoe!
It is really so hard, because finding the shoe comfortable is only good to exclude the totally inappropriate shoes (that may fit others like your lucky husband perfectly), the good ones may still cause problems while running.
I hope it will prove right in running too.



2007 days ago



WATERMELLEN

I like (and understand) your loyalty to your running shoe store.

Generally shoes "on line" don't work well for me either -- need to try 'em on.

And when it comes to "dress" shoes: nobody looks good ever wearing shoes that are uncomfortable: you can spot it a block away!!
2007 days ago



CD4114015

I hope your feet will be happy....I actually have what I call "the most difficult feet in the world" and I think I do....so do understand....and I don't even RUN!



2007 days ago



BBEAGAN

Ach, shoes are hard! I have hard to fit feet, too. I almost always buy an extra pair of ones I like, in case they are no longer available when I need them! I found some winter boots a while





back, that work for my feet and can handle ice well (I walk to work). I also kind of expect decent footwear to last more than one season! I bought a second pair of those boots at the end of their first winter. They are now entering winter 4 (yay!) and I still have the unworn backups! It's such relief to know when my current boots die I have another pair waiting! Good luck with your running shoes.

2007 days ago



ONEKIDSMOM

I'm totally with you in supporting my local running store(s). I have divided loyalties... there's the one downtown that supplied me for years and is now VERY convenient to where I work, and the one that I took my training group class with that started very near to my HOME just a little over a year ago.

So, I buy some things one place and some the other, but I love them BOTH! The on-line shopping for athletic gear is for things neither of them carries... like my niece's own designs, or my triathlon swim gear. For biking stuff? I have a local bike shop.

Here's to the full service these small businesses offer to me... like you, I'm picky about comfort... and while I may TRY new shoe models from time to time, for important distance events, I'm back in the models I have been running in for years.



Hope your new shoes work well for you, as you build that mileage back up!

2007 days ago



JANETRW50

If they work you should go back to the store and buy a couple other pairs before the manufacturer decides to improve them!

2007 days ago



HOLLYM48

Good luck with the new shoes. Good running or walking shoes are hard to find the perfect fit. Have a great weekend.

2007 days ago



MISCHAKEO

I hope the new shoes work out!



2007 days ago



POINDEXTRA

I've got hard-to-fit feet as well, and also buy my athletic shoes at the local running store. They work hard to fit people, and have a terrific return policy. Once I purchased a shoe that ended up being too narrow, and they took them back (for credit) almost a year later with no box - now that's service! I'll buy many things on-line to save a buck, but not my shoes!

2007 days ago



TERI-RIFIC

I know what you mean about changing the shoes! I, too, hate it when I find a shoe I really like and then they change it!! I still remember the first 5 star shoe Saucony made-the Lady Jazz. It was yellow and blue and it was half the price of other shoes. Then Saucony got popular and their shoes doubled in price and they changed the Jazz. Right now, I run in Altra Olympus. The zero drop, max cushion really works for my former stress fracture site and the foot shaped toe box means zero blisters-ever! I hope you run happy with the new shoes!

2007 days ago



CD2244567



2007 days ago



TABBYMARIE74

Good luck with the new shoes! :)

2007 days ago

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