



Put Your Best Foot Forward

By Melissa Hernandez, LMT, Lic.#2679, CMnTPT, CES, LF

“The human foot is a masterpiece of engineering and a work of art.”

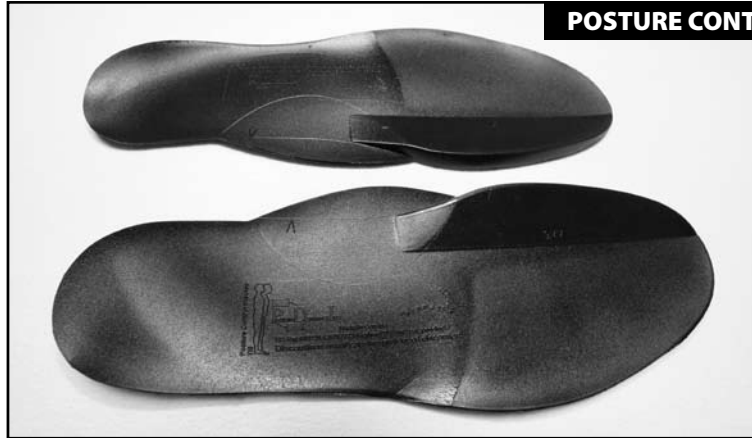
— Leonardo da Vinci

Your feet are your foundation, a relatively small platform upon which your whole weight rests. Your toes work as a perceptive system by sensing the location of your body weight, which maintains the stability of your body. Want to see it for yourself? Try standing on one leg with bare feet and see how hard they work!

When you are walking or running, your toes are meant to grasp, balance, and direct your feet forward during push off. Every time your foot pushes off the ground, your big toe supports most of your body's weight. Because the big toe is so critical to movement, any problem with it can make walking or even standing painful. About 70 years ago, Dr. Morton discovered that many people have a short first metatarsal bone (your big toe bone), and that it impacts the way they walk. Thirty years ago, Dr. Rothbart discovered that not only is the first metatarsal often short, it is also slightly rotated and elevated when the foot and ankle are placed in its optimal neutral position. An estimated 80 to 90% of the population are born with this foot structure!

So, what does this mean? Every time you stand or walk, and put weight on your forefoot, the first metatarsal has to travel a small distance down to become weight bearing. As this happens, something called over-pronation occurs. A mechanical chain reaction in your entire body's posture takes place: your arches collapse, your ankles roll in, your knees twist inward, your hips tilt forward, and your upper body shifts forward. Over-pronation (rolling in of your feet), causes a forward leaning unbalanced posture, affecting everything from your feet all the way up to your head, neck, and jaw!

Why do you think so many people have this foot structure? Originally the human foot was designed to adapt to varying terrains so the big toe is slightly shorter, elevated, and rotated in comparison to the rest of your foot, to optimize movement. But, in present times we walk on flat ground all day long. We have paved sidewalks, flat streets, and level floors. The foot wasn't designed to



POSTURE CONTROL INSOLES

Full Circle Wellness Center will get you going on the right foot with Posture Control Insoles and Myofascial Trigger Point Therapy.

constantly walk on a level surface.

This first metatarsal “deficit” impairs movement of the muscles in the calf and foot. The muscles become restricted, painful, and imbalanced around the joints. When the calf muscles are tight, it causes altered movement when walking because the ankle doesn't have enough flexibility to allow the leg to move forward over the foot, and the foot compensates for this lack of flexibility by rolling inward.

Many musculoskeletal disorders can originate from, or be exacerbated by, over-pronation: Bunions, plantar fasciitis, heel spurs, arthritis, heel pain, arch pain, and metatarsalgia, along with knee pain, hip pain, back pain, headaches, and even TMJ Dysfunction!

If you move with altered biomechanics, your problems can become disabling in the latter stages in life, resulting in progressively worsening pain, impaired function, and possibly even surgery. But, going through life with painful feet isn't necessary!

Here are some pointers to get you going on the right foot.

Correcting Structural Issues. Supporting the first metatarsal joint becomes necessary to avoid postural distortions and muscular imbalances. *Posture Control Insoles* (PCI's) are the answer. They are ultra-thin, comfortable to wear, and the only lift in the PCI's is located specifically under the first metatarsal. Instead of restricting foot motion like traditional orthotics, PCI's enhance and synchronize normal foot motion by

providing tactile stimulation to the bottom of the feet, which strengthens your feet by keeping your muscles active and balanced. The result is improved posture and less strain on the muscles, joints, and ligaments. With the use of PCI's thousands of people have found relief from shin splints, Achilles pain, plantar fasciitis, painful calluses, knee pain, as well as hip and back pain.

PCI's are guaranteed by the manufacturer, and are sold at Full Circle Wellness Center. However, improved results can occur when used in conjunction with Myofascial and Trigger Point Therapy to help release painful restrictions in the muscles.

Correcting Muscular Imbalances. Myofascial and Trigger Point Therapy inactivates trigger points by applying manual compression on the trigger points, utilizing advanced muscle release techniques and stretches to bring the muscle back to its full normal length. *In order to determine if your pain problem is muscular in nature, a prescription from your Doctor is required.* Full Circle Wellness Center provides the highest quality of care in the treatment of many different kinds of pain disorders caused by Myofascial Trigger Points.

Our office hours are 9:00am to 7:00pm Monday through Saturday. We are located at 1719 Girard Blvd. NE, ½ block North of Indian School. Call us at 505-265-3400. Free consultations available. Now accepting most forms of insurance!