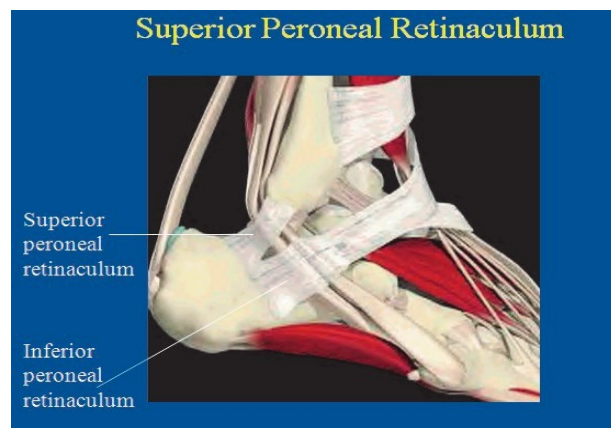


How the Body Works...

Be nice to your feet: They carry your whole body!

Your feet are your base of support for your whole body. If your feet aren't happy, nothing above them will be. Yet many women abuse their feet and their body for the sake of fashion. Statistics show that high heels are one of the biggest factors leading to foot problems in women, with up to a third suffering permanent problems as a result of prolonged wear!

When you wear high heels it causes a lot of stress on the front part of your foot and a narrow toe box can cause bunions. Wearing high heels often can lead to a whole host of problems and not just in your feet. When heels are worn it causes increased weight on your toes. This causes your body to tilt forward, and to compensate, you lean backwards and overarch your back, creating a posture that can strain your knees, hips, and lower back. Women who wear high heels every day can also develop muscle tightness in their calves and lower back. If not corrected this can lead to shortened tendons (specifically the Achilles tendon) and muscles of the lower back. This could then lead to plantar fasciitis, another painful foot condition. When walking in heels it is like walking on a balance beam. One wrong move can lead to an ankle sprain!



So what is a girl to do? *Continued on Page 2*

Truths/Myths about Exercise

Think you know the facts about getting fit?

“If a muscle is big it has to be strong.”

The gluteus maximus (buttock muscle or glutes) is the biggest muscle of the body. It moves the hips and helps to stabilize the spine and the pelvis. The glutes are also one of the major muscles used to move your legs when walking, running, and jumping. Since it is the biggest muscle it is also the strongest right? Wrong! Because of our sedentary lifestyle and because many people sit at a desk all day, the muscles in

the front of the hip (the iliopsoas and the rectus femoris) get tight and the glutes gradually lose tone and strength, from lack of use. Weak glutes negatively affects performance, decreases lower body strength and are a major cause for many injuries and pain, specifically lower back pain. So what can we do? ‘Get out of your chair at work’. Work on waking your glutes up and doing specific exercises to great

strengthen your glutes. Stair climbing and skating are great to strengthen glute muscles. If your glutes never get sore from working out they may not be functioning properly. This is where a physical therapist can help get you on the right road to waking up those glutes and getting them strong again.

True Stories...

"Knee Pain, But Why??"

Amy was an occasional runner who decided to train for a half marathon. When she increased her mileage she started to develop knee pain. She then also had pain when she was descending steps. She went to her physician who told her she had patellofemoral pain (or pain under the kneecap) and sent her to physical therapy.

Amy was evaluated by a Health Connections physical therapist who looked at her hips, knees and feet, watched her walk and watched her run on a treadmill. It was determined that she had weakness in her hip and glute muscles (primarily her gluteus medius and the external rotators) and she had excessive pronation in her feet (almost flat feet). It was determined that both of these factors contributed to her knee pain. She was given strengthening exercises for her hip and she bought over the counter insoles to help the alignment in her feet and within a couple of weeks her knee pain went away! Focusing on the Knee Cap Pain would have failed!

This is just another example that the knee was the manifestation of her knee pain but the two drivers were her hips and feet.

How The Body Works...

Be nice to your feet (From Pg. 1)

Do we have to give up heels for life? No but here are some things that can help you avoid multiple problems from wearing heels too often.

- Choose sensible heels. The higher the heel the worse it is for your foot and the more stress it places on your body. Also the more narrow the heel the less support it has.
- Choose a thicker heel for more support. Stiletto heels are the worst for support.
- Make sure your shoes are the correct size and the toe box is wide enough. You need to make sure you buy not only the correct length but also the correct width.
- Alternate shoes daily. Make sure to also wear flats.
- Make sure to stretch your calves daily, but especially on days when you wear heels.
- Try not to wear heels on days when you will do a lot of walking or standing
- Take a break from your shoes during the day. Take your shoes off during the day and stretch your ankles and toes.
- Buy over the counter shoe inserts. They are called metatarsal pads. It is a pad that goes under the ball of your foot to decrease stress and to help hold your foot in place.

Don't let your sense of style cripple your ability to stand or step pain-free. Taking small steps now can avoid big problems down the road.

Healthy/Unhealthy Habits

Exercise and Hard Work?

Since I do manual labor all day I don't need to exercise right?

Wrong! People who do manual labor all day are at an even greater risk for muscle imbalances and therefore injury.

People who do manual labor would benefit from rounding out their activities with some planned exercise. A good exercise program should be balanced between cardio,

strength, core and flexibility. A good workout program should be progressive and variable, whereas their job typically stays similar thru the years.

Regular exercise helps with manual labor by:

-Balancing out your muscles so some aren't overly developed while others are poorly developed
-Maintain a level of fitness to prevent injuries

-Teach proper movement patterns to decrease risk of injury at work

-Increase the strength of all your muscles, making manual labor at work easier

So no more excuses. You can speak with a physical therapist to help design a program that fits your specific needs.

