

Hints and Tips on footwear and safety

General guidance:

Ensure your footwear is well fitting and check the shoe has good depth and width at the toes to allow for natural spread of the toes when you stand up. Check your footwear (and socks and stockings) have a smooth seam free interior which will not rub or cause friction on the foot when it is worn. If your slippers have that 'lived-in' look it might be time to change them.

Choose your footwear so it is appropriate for the activity being undertaken. Slippers generally provide poor support to the feet and are only appropriate to wear within the home when sitting for periods.



If your footwear has no support around the heel or an open toe (e.g. sling backs/ slip on shoes and sandals or slippers or mules), your foot may slide around or slip out of the shoe when you are walking, causing instability and falls. Ensure your footwear has appropriate fastenings such as laces, Velcro or straps to hold your foot securely within the shoe or slipper.

Avoid wearing high or narrow heels (especially heels over 1.5inches/3.81cm high) as these impact balance and stability when walking. Where possible wear shoes with a low broad heel or a slightly flared heel to provide your foot with additional stability.



Footwear should have a cushioned flexible non slip sole, however if the sole is too thick, it may mean it is harder to 'feel' the ground underneath and could affect your balance. Take care if choosing training or sports shoes as some have quite thick soles.

Never walk barefoot or in stocking feet, especially if you are diabetic or if you have poor circulation or dull sensation in your feet - footwear protects the foot.

Ensure your socks and stockings are not too tight around toes and calves where they can restrict your circulation.

Always wear any splints, supports or special footwear where they have been supplied.