

Throw your shoes away...

By Andrew Dixon

Since 1972 shoe technology has come along in leaps and bounds. Back then, runners (distance variety) would sustain injuries to their feet, ankles and knees at alarming rates. Statistics show that around 65% of runners would be injured each year. Now after 37 years shoe technology is amazing. With motion control roll bars and micro chipped thrust enhancers you'd expect the injury rate to have dropped to near zero. Well, that's what the \$20 billion dollar running shoe industry would like us to believe. According to a 1989 study by Dr Bernard Marti, runners wearing the most expensive top of the range shoes are 123% more likely to get injured than those wearing the cheaper brands. That study is 20 years old, so you'd think that things have gotten better, but they haven't. Now, every year around 65% to 80% of runners are injured and the rate may be increasing.

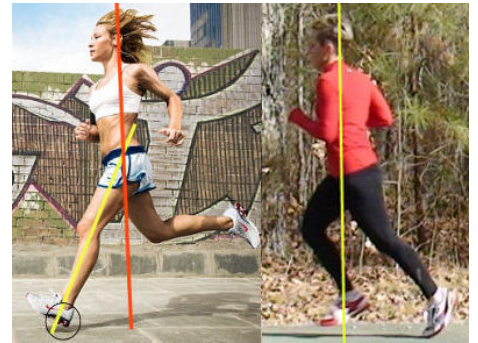
Research from Canada shows that gymnasts land harder on 'softer' surfaces. This appears to be due to reduced proprioception on softer surfaces that results in loss of balance if they don't land harder to get the 'feel'.

Level 1, 156 Maroondah Hwy
Ringwood 3134
9870 4050

So despite the cushioning effect of the mat, the joints take more impact than on the harder surfaces. Another study found that people with osteoarthritis of the knee and hips who participated in bare foot walking reduced loads by up to 11.9% at the knee and 10.5% at the hip. It's also been suggested by some neuroscientists that over using shoes may lead to earlier use of canes and other walking devices as our feet become desensitised over the years.

How can this be, with all the money poured into shoe research? It seems to be that Mother Nature can't be topped by science in the foot department. Our feet contain sensory nerves to tell the foot how to react to the ground surface depending on how hard or uneven it is. When we put it in a shoe with a soft cushy sole we lose sensation of the ground and assume it's safe to apply maximum pressure. This results in significantly higher loading to the ankles, knees, hips and lower back. The more expensive the shoe, the more cushioning and added confidence it gives you resulting in more loading and more injury.

The problem seems to be mainly in the heel. When there is a heel cushion there you will use it, and when



On the left is an obvious heel strike on a straight leg. The right shoes a toe strike on a bent knee for shock absorption.

barefoot you most likely will not. Runners in bare feet will strike the ground with their fore foot and with a bent knee to cushion the impact. The foot will roll in slightly and you will push off your toes. Shoes encourage a strong heel strike on a straight leg resulting in more joint loading, and the natural rocker in the toes means your foot doesn't really have to do much at all. Spend enough time in shoes and your foot will become weak, just like spending a few weeks with your leg in plaster will cause your leg to become weak.

Solutions:

When I discovered the Vibram Five Fingers in London a few years ago, I thought they looked obscene. There was no way I was about to put those things on my feet. A year later, I purchased my first pair and haven't looked back. They still look a little weird, but if they will keep the surgeon away from my knees,

I'm happy to have them on my feet. They are comfortable once you get used to them, but if you're not an avid bare footer you may need to get some Nike Frees or Chuck Taylors first.

The research is out there and Vibram Five Fingers provide the closest thing to a bare foot, with protection from glass and other rubbish on the ground. If you doubt the effectiveness of our bare foot from a performance standpoint, consider Ethiopian Abebe who won the marathon at the 1960 olympics. He beat the world record and did it in bare feet. Many high level athletes prefer to train bare foot over the best shoes Nike has to offer. Nike even started making the 'Free' to accommodate the barefoot community, but in my opinion it doesn't come close to bare

foot or even the Vibram Fivefingers.



Vibram Fivefingers, the closest thing to bare feet, but with just enough protection from glass and dirt.

If you decide barefoot (or fivefinger wearing) is for you (and it is) you should start off with just a few minutes walking a day increasing slowly as your foot strengthens. For best results you should walk barefoot on the grass, sand and in the dirt to get completely in touch with nature. Give it a go, it's the way nature intended.

What Grinds Jarrod's Gears!!!

You know what Grinds my gears:

- People that drive 10 kms under the speed limit in the right hand lane, Keep left unless overtaking, why is that so hard?
- People that send text messages that are long enough to contain chapters, if it requires that much information just call!
- The little wrappers on cheese slices, why can we reach the moon and yet can't produce a wrapper that doesn't destroy my cheese slice?



The information provided in this newsletter is for general educational purposes only. It is not intended to be relied upon as, nor to be a substitute for, specific professional advice. If you are currently under the care of a medical practitioner, you have any injuries or you are taking prescription medication, it is recommended that you seek professional advice prior to starting any fitness program.

4 WEEK UNLIMITED GROUP EXERCISE!



\$150

Lamb Thai Salad

Jarrod

Ingredients:

- 500gms lamb backstraps
- 1 tbl macadamia oil
- 1 red onion peeled & thinly sliced
- 10 radishes, washed trimmed & thinly sliced
- 1 stick celery diagonal sliced
- 100gms bean sprouts
- 1 tbl coriander
- 2 tbl basil freshly chopped
- 1 red chilli, seeded & finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 tbl ginger, grated

Dressing:

- 2 tbl fish sauce
- 1 tbl lemongrass finely chopped
- 1 tbl light soy sauce
- 1 tbl sesame oil
- 1/2 lime juiced
- 1 tsp brown sugar

Method

1. Heat oil in large fry pan.
2. Cook lamb for 2 mins each side.
3. Reduce heat & continue to cook using medium heat.
4. Cover with foil & rest for 5 minutes
5. Slice lamb on the diagonal.
6. Mix dressing with a fork in a bowl.
7. Combine vegetable ingredients in a bowl.

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