

## **DOES YOUR JOB REQUIRE YOU TO STAND FOR LONG HOURS?**

Standing for 10 or more hours a day can wear your feet out quickly. If you have a job that requires you to stand for hours on end, if you have to commute to work in crowded trains standing for almost 1 ½ to 2 hours, waiting in long bus queues, then you know the feeling of strained, aching feet. But many of these situations are unavoidable, so the best option one has is to adopt and try different ways to reduce the strain on your feet.

In Mumbai where the population traveling for work in public transport is huge, this problem is encountered by employees who travel by buses and trains, which are over-crowded. This is their plight even before they reach their place of work where they would further be required to stand. Frequently we hear people in the age group 40 to 50 complaining of back problems, knee pain, heel pain which could be a result of the load their feet have to take through the day.

Standing on the job not only accelerates tiredness and fatigue, but it also increases the risk of various foot and leg problems because it puts strain on bones, joints, tendons, muscles and ligaments. Standing for long periods of time also causes reduced blood supply to the lower extremities, which promotes soreness. Prolonged standing may also create an accumulation of blood in the foot or around the ankles. Flat feet, plantar fasciitis, bunions, edema (swelling), varicose veins and venous insufficiency are all problems associated with prolonged standing. Fortunately, there are many ways to reduce or avoid the risks of foot and leg problems if you must stand a lot at work.

Many professions like the Salesman in retail stores, Traffic Police, Teachers/Professors, Hairdressers, Flight crew, Security staff, Chefs, Construction workers, require long standing hours extending to almost 8 to 10 hours in a day.

**YOUR JOB IS IMPORTANT BUT SO ARE YOUR FEET!** There are many ways which will help ease the pressure on your ACHING FEET.

- i) Relieve the pressure on the feet from time to time i.e give them a break**
  - a. Sit for a couple of minutes whenever you can.
  - b. Walk around when you can instead of standing in one place too long.
  - c. Wiggle your toes.
  - d. Shift your weight from one foot to the other.
  - e. Sit down for lunch
  - f. Sit down during breaks
  - g. Stand in different spots
  - h. Stretch When You Can
  - i. While at work, try standing with one foot slightly raised (a 6-inch footstool is ideal).
  - j. Propping your feet up above the rest of your body (against a wall or on some pillows) will help decrease the swelling caused by standing at work.

## II) **Your Footwear matters**

- a. Work shoes should also provide good arch support. This helps reduce weakness and soreness in the legs and feet
- b. Don't wear high heels it is a requirement for women to wear high heels for many jobs, but heels more than 2 inches (5.1 cm) high can force the body to tilt forward, which creates a variety of imbalances from the feet to the low back. Wearing completely level shoes is not the answer either, because too much pressure is put on the heel, so wear shoes that are elevated in the heel by about 1/4 or 1/2 inch.
- c. Most athletic or walking shoes with wide toe caps are good choices if you must stand for hours at a time at your job.
- d. Don't wear narrow shoes. High heels are often too narrow at the toe, which compresses the toes together unnaturally and increases the risk of painful bunions and unsightly calluses.
- e. Choose shoes that grip your heel tightly, provides enough room to wiggle your toes and has enough interior support to prevent pronation (the rolling inward or collapsing of your ankle).
- f. Wear shoes that fit properly. A lot of people wear shoes that are not the right size, they are either too cramped or too big. Either way, always wear shoes to work that properly fit your feet while wearing socks.
- g. Sacrificing style and fashion for practicality is the best strategy when shopping for work shoes.
- h. Wear shoe orthotics. Orthotics are custom-made insoles for your shoes designed to provide arch support, shock absorption and better foot biomechanics, which can translate into less foot/leg/back pain and reduced risk of various foot and leg conditions.

## III) **Care for Your Feet**

- a. Cold packs recommended at the spot where there is inflammation.
- b. Pour warm water on your feet to relax muscles
- c. Massage your feet. Roll your foot from heel to toe over a tennis ball or baseball. The gentle massage on your feet and arches will stretch tight foot muscles and help your feet recover more quickly.
- d. Elevate your feet above the rest of your body (against a wall or on a stack of pillows) will help decrease the day's swelling.

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<http://blog.mynycpodiatrist.com/blog/bid/320473/Foot-Care-Tips-from-a-New-York-Podiatrist-Standing-Up-for-Your-Feet>

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