



# FOOT SENSE

A monthly newsletter from your podiatrist



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## Strategies to Tackle Knee Pain by Addressing Your Foot Problems

It happens to many of us. We decide to go for a run and then, whammo, our knee starts to ache. We start to wonder whether this is just normal aging, arthritis, or a leftover problem from all the sports we played in high school or college.

While any of those causes are distinct possibilities, a less considered source is your feet.



### How Foot Problems Can Affect Your Knees

Your feet have a big job to do. Made up of 26 bones, 30 joints, and over 100 ligaments, your feet are a remarkably complex system that must provide a steady base for your entire body.

It's hard enough for your feet to provide needed support if you have normal arches and no foot pain. But because many of us have flat feet, overpronate, or supinate (roll our feet in or out), and have foot issues like heel pain, bunion pain, or ball of foot pain, our gait is bound to affect not only our knees but our hips and back as well. And the effect on our feet is compounded if we're athletes.

Anytime you must adjust the way you walk to accommodate pain or another foot problem, that problem is likely to reverberate throughout your body.

And studies bear this out. A strong association has been found between specific foot conditions and knee pain. One study showed

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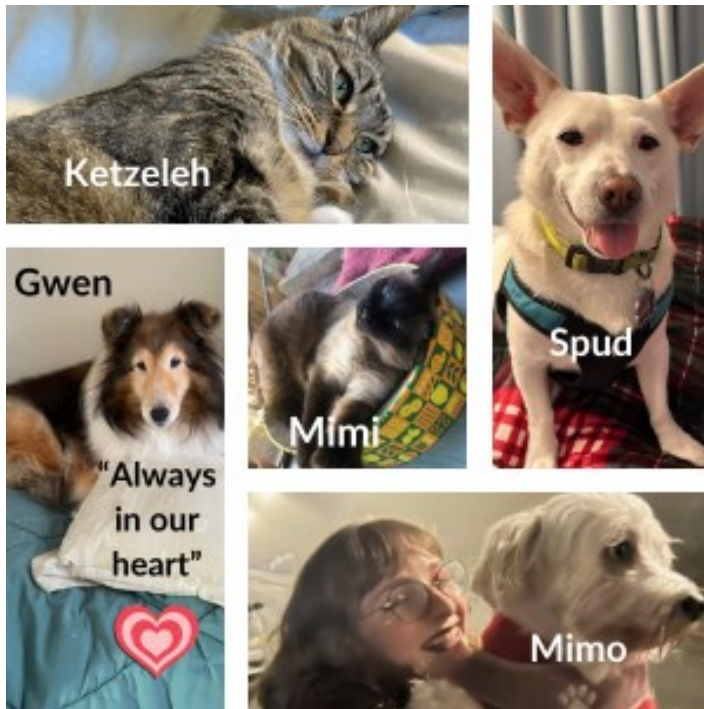
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## Our Beloved Pets!



## The Best Minestrone Soup

There's nothing like a big pot of homemade soup in the winter. Enjoy!

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 white or yellow onion, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 2 large carrots, sliced
- 1 medium (or 2 small) yukon gold potatoes, diced into ½ inch cubes
- 1 (28 ounce) can fire roasted crushed tomatoes
- 1 (15 ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1 teaspoon italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 8 ounces green beans, trimmed and cut into 1 inch pieces



[Source: Ambitious Kitchen](#)

1. Add olive oil to a large pot and place over medium-high heat. Add in diced onion, celery, sliced carrots and potatoes. Saute for 3-5 minutes or until onions soften.
2. Add in crushed tomatoes, kidney beans, vegetable broth, Italian seasoning, red pepper flakes and salt and pepper. Cover and cook on medium low for 10-15 minutes.
3. Stir in the green beans, spinach and pasta. Cook uncovered for 8-12 more minutes or until pasta is al dente and green beans are tender. Pour into a bowl and serve with parmesan cheese on top.

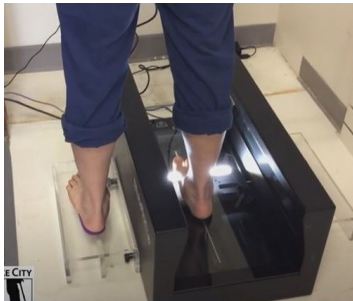
patients with flat feet had significantly greater knee pain than patients with normal arches.

In another study, men with right foot pain were five to seven times more likely to have pain in their right knee or both knees when compared to men with no foot pain.

## 5 Strategies to Keep Your Feet From Contributing to Knee Pain

### 1. Get Custom Orthotics

Custom orthotics can rebalance your feet so that your body as well as your feet stays in alignment. Orthotics can also help with shock absorption so that your body doesn't have to take on as much stress.



In addition, if you have other types of foot problems such as heel pain, Achilles tendonitis, or ball of foot pain, custom orthotics will also help alleviate your pain over the long term. When your feet aren't in pain your body won't need to accommodate itself to the pain throwing off your gait and affecting your knees.

Our office offers 3D printed orthotics which are ideal for athletes. We use the GO4D system to analyze your feet and gait and provide you with the right level of foot support from front to back.

### 2. Improve Your Running and Playing Technique

How you run and play sports can also impact your feet and your knees. So, what are the components of running correctly?

### *Posture*

It's important to have proper body alignment when you run or play sports. Keeping your head high, your shoulders open and tummy tucked and your hips facing forward will help.

### *Knee Lift*

Avoid lifting your knees too high when you run to avoid too much impact with your foot strike.

### *Movement*

Keep a slight bend in your knee making sure it's not fully extended, don't overstride, and try to land on your midfoot when it's directly underneath your body. If you land too far in front of your body, it will be like putting the brakes on with every foot strike. This will put a lot of unneeded stress on your knees.

### 3. Proper Treadmill Running

Running on a treadmill is different from running on pavement. To protect your knees read my blog, "[9 Ways to Prevent Foot Injuries When Running on A Treadmill](#)".

### 4. Purchase the Right Shoes

Buying the right shoes for your sport and your foot type is critical in preventing foot and knee injuries. Every sport has different hazards and shoes are designed to limit those hazards. To learn more about how to buy the right shoes for your foot type and other important considerations visit, "[How to Buy the Best Running Shoes](#)". While this blog is specific to running, there is also great information for people involved in other sports.

### 5. Maintain Proper Weight

The more you weigh the more impact on your feet and knees when you run or play sports. In fact, running puts seven times more stress on your feet and body than walking.

Call us today if you have knee pain!

## Breathing Easy Indoors: Winter Wellness Tips for Maintaining Air Quality

In the winter, most of us like to hunker down indoors to escape the cold and rain. While your feet get a reprieve, indoor air quality is usually not the best and can adversely affect other aspects of your health. By keeping windows and doors closed against the elements we expose ourselves to pollutants and allergens.

Here are some ways to mitigate the health effects of spending lot's of time indoors.

- Vacuum and dust regularly. Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter and dust with a microfiber or damp cloth.
- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they work.
- Open your windows for 10 minutes a day (unless your outdoor air quality is poor).
- Wash your sheets weekly.
- Replace air filters regularly for optimal air circulation. Use filters with a MERV-13 rating.
- Start a no-shoes policy in your home. Set aside a place at your front door and provide slippers for your guests.
- Avoid chemicals such as air fresheners, sprays and cleaning products or use a healthier option.



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—Dr. Rion Berg

