

### Balance and footwear

How good is your balance? Do you have problems when you stand up, walk, turn around, climb stairs or sit down? Have you noticed that your walking style has changed - perhaps a tendency to shuffle?

There are many changes to our bodies as we get older, and having effective balance helps us to live independently.



#### Your balance can be affected by:

##### Medication

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if any of your medications could be causing this.

##### Inner ear problems

Even something as simple as wax in your ear can affect your balance, so have your ears checked regularly.

##### Sudden movements

Declines in sensory and motor systems can impact your sense of body position, reaction time and movement coordination. Gentle exercise may be able to help with this problem. See [activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au](http://activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au) for more information.

##### Colds and sinus

These can throw you off balance. See your doctor and keep up to date with immunisations.

##### Footwear

The wrong footwear can make you unsteady. See a podiatrist for advice.

If you are concerned in any way about your balance, talk to your doctor. You might be referred to a physiotherapist or an exercise physiologist for a balance test or a tailored exercise program.

To improve your balance and strength, it is important to do specific exercises every second day. To download a copy of exercises to improve your strength and balance visit [healthpromotion.com.au/healthy-ageing](http://healthpromotion.com.au/healthy-ageing) or for a hard copy, call 4320 9700.

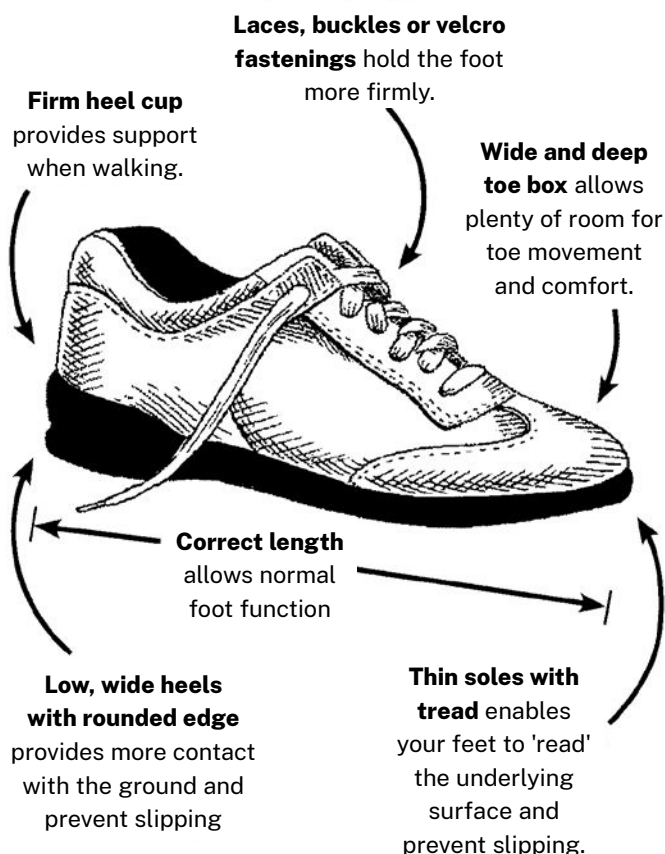
# Look after your feet

As our feet grow older, they can change shape and lose some feeling and flexibility. This changes the way we walk. Painful and uncomfortable feet is something you shouldn't put up with.

## Here are some tips to help you look after your feet.

- See your podiatrist or doctor if you have foot pain or foot problems.
- People with diabetes, take special care of your feet and check regularly for any redness.
- Dry your feet well, particularly between the toes.
- Visit your podiatrist regularly to review your feet, cut nails and treat any corns.
- Foot and ankle strengthening exercises help with blood flow to your feet and balance. Download the Prevent Falls with Stronger Feet brochure, at [healthpromotion.com.au/healthy-ageing](http://healthpromotion.com.au/healthy-ageing) or call 4320 9700.

## Shoes should have...



## Shopping tips

- Shoes should fit properly when you buy them. They should not need to be stretched or broken in. Don't be pressured by sales staff. Don't feel right, do not buy them!
- If you have lost or gained weight-you may need new shoes to ensure good fit.
- Feet tend to swell during the day, so try shoes on in the afternoon.
- Wear your usual socks, stockings or orthotics when trying shoes.
- Try on both shoes - many people have different sized feet.
- Buy shoes by fit not size.
- Don't shop when your feet hurt.
- To get used to your new shoes wear them on a variety of surfaces at home for 1 hour. Then check for redness or blisters.



Central Coast  
Local Health District

For more information visit:

[healthpromotion.com.au/healthy-ageing](http://healthpromotion.com.au/healthy-ageing)

[activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au](http://activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au)

[gethealthynsw.com.au](http://gethealthynsw.com.au)

Phone: Central Coast Health Promotion Service 4320 9700