

Summer Shoes

Choosing the right shoes in the summer depends on your activity and the weather. Luckily, there is now an abundance of options to meet all your needs, including fitting your orthotics! Sandals are a go-to option in the summer, but flip-flops are notorious for causing sore feet by the end of the season. The key to staying comfortable is knowing what to look for and when to use it (see article about selecting sandals).

There are plenty of good options out there but being selective is important. The main thing you'll want to avoid for daily use, or lots of walking, is any sandal that is completely flat and too flexible. Ideally, you'll want a sandal to have similar features to your shoes/orthotics. Arch support and metatarsal arch support (support right behind the ball of the foot) will go a long way to keeping your feet happy. A molded heel cup, some cushioning (beware of memory foam, it tends to bottom out quickly) can be helpful and for some feet a rocker sole eases forefoot pain and pain in the first toe joint.

The other option for sandals is to look for a sandal with a removable footbed, so you can continue to use your custom-made foot orthotics (CFO). It is not always obvious that the whole footbed is removable so your Pedorthist or specialty shoe retailer can help you find the right ones!

The strapping and fit of the sandal are also not something to be overlooked. You'll want to make sure your foot isn't too compressed at the front but still secure on your foot so that you don't end up gripping with your toes to keep the sandal on. Single strap sandals are not very secure and lead to tension in the foot so more straps are advisable. Adjustable straps, or even a back strap, are a great way to ensure you've got a good fit.

Once you find a good pair of sandals, a good way to beat the heat is to use a pair as your indoor footwear. That way you have support and comfort. Slippers can often just be too hot during a heat wave but having a pair of sandals indoors is a great way to stay cool and comfortable.

If you're not a sandal person, but find your shoes too hot, consider going with something lightweight. Look for something with the same supportive features, but a breathable mesh, or cut out design, like a Mary Jane style. This will be a little cooler, but still give you a closed toe look. This type of footwear can often easily fit your CFOs.

If you're planning on doing a lot of walking, hiking, or running this summer, talk to your Canadian Certified Pedorthist about the right shoe to for you. There are a lot of different levels of support, but in the summer, consider the type of upper. A shoe with a mesh upper is going to be a lot more breathable than other options.

If you need waterproof footwear for hiking or just for getting caught in the rain while out walking your dog, consider a Gortex shoe for full waterproofing.

The final thing to consider would be the tread/sole. If you know you'll be out on the trails most of the time, consider a trail shoe. It will have a more heavy-duty tread for increased traction, and likely

even a "rock plate" of some kind to help protect the delicate areas of the foot from anything protruding from the ground.

Your activity dictates the type of footwear you will need. If you are at the beach or lake, do you want leather sandals, or is a water sandal going to be better? Going to ride your bike? Maybe consider that closed toe sandal instead for a bit of extra protection or your running shoes! Going for a long walk? Maybe forgo the sandals and stick to a mesh version of your favourite athletic shoe. The key is to stay active so you need to find the best ways to achieve that goal.