RAPPAHANNOCK FOOT & ANKLE SPECIALISTS

Board Certified Surgeons - Podiatrists

How do you pick out shoes?

There are ***3 important characteristics*** to a stable shoe: (video explanation at AAPSM.com)

Heel Counter Rigidity ("Stability Shoe")
Squeeze the back of the shoe (heel counter) where your heel will sit. It should be stiff and not compress when you squeeze it. If it is flimsy then the shoe will allow too much motion for your foot.

Flexion Stability ("Motion Control Shoe")
Grasp the front of the shoe with one hand and the back of the shoe with the other hand so that you are facing the side of the shoe. While stabilizing the heel, bend the front of the shoe towards the back of the shoe. Don't be gentle! The shoe should bend only where the toes bend. If it bends in the middle of the shoe then it will allow too much motion for your foot.

Torsional Stability ("Motion Control Shoe")
Hold the shoe so that it is facing you again. Now twist the shoe back and forth. Too much twisting motion creates instability and too much motion. Beware of shoes that have "midfoot cutouts" as part of their soles.

A ***4th* characteristic** is important *only in side-to-side* sports like tennis or basketball:

Upper Stability
Put your hand in the middle of the shoe using the other hand to stabilize the shoe from the shoe's bottom. Move your hand to the left and to the right. If you can push the cloth or leather off the top of the shoe significantly then your foot or orthotic will slide during side-to-side activity. This will create instability and excess motion even if the shoe passes the first three tests.

Why do you need to have stable shoes?

- Unstable shoes allow too much motion in your feet and can lead to painful pathology by placing excess stress upon your ligaments, tendons, muscles, nerves, bones and joints.
- Orthotics need stable shoes to maximize their corrective potential.

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