

ON YOUR FEET

Whether you're working in a warehouse, a health care setting or behind a cash register, constant standing can stress the joints of your feet, ankles, knees hips and spine. Try the following to reduce the stress.



Supportive Shoes

Choose shoes with good arch support to distribute weight evenly and reduce strain on the joints, ample cushioning to absorb shock and reduce impact on the feet and joints, a wide toe box to avoid cramping painful toes, and low or no heels to maintain natural foot positioning and balance. Also consider getting custom orthotic insoles made by a podiatrist or physical therapist to provide additional support tailored to your specific needs.

Compression Hose

Compression hose help improve blood flow in the legs by applying graduated pressure, which can reduce swelling and prevent blood pooling and swelling in feet and ankles. Improved circulation and reduced swelling can help alleviate pain and discomfort. Speak with your doctor or occupational therapist or physical therapist about the best hose for you.

Anti-Stress/Fatigue Mats

If you stand in one place much of the day, consider using a mat designed to reduce discomfort and fatigue. Made from materials like foam, gel, or rubber, anti-stress mats provide a cushioned surface that absorbs the shock of standing and reduces pressure on the feet, legs and back.

Frequent Breaks

Take breaks to sit and elevate your feet. Also do gentle exercises, such as ankle circles to improve circulation and reduce pain and stiffness. While seated comfortably with your feet flat on the floor, lift one foot off the ground slightly and slowly rotate your ankle in a circular motion, first clockwise and then counterclockwise. Perform 10 to 15 circles in each direction, then switch feet and repeat the exercises.

Ramps and Elevators

When possible, choose ramps and elevators over stairs. If you must use stairs, always use the handrail for support. If one leg is more severely affected, step up with the stronger leg first when climbing stairs, then follow with the weaker or more painful leg. When going down steps, step down with your weaker, more painful leg, then follow with the stronger one.

Proper Posture

Practicing good posture doesn't just apply to sitting. It also applies when standing. Avoid slouching. Keep your feet flat on the floor and hip-width apart, your knees slightly bent, your hips aligned, your back and neck straight, and your gaze forward.