

1.3 – Identifying Problematic Issues Through Foot Wear

As is human nature to adapt and function, the body is continuously in a steady search for a stable structure in which to apply force. However, when the foot is not optimally functioning the body instinctively selects the wrong point in which to apply this force. When this happens a massive amount of force is improperly distributed into both the ankle and knee complexes. Sadly, this is only one side of the equation.

From a secondary perspective we must also consider another variable that leads to improper distribution of force. The variable we are referring to is the co-contractive properties of the neuromuscular system. The body may simply lack the co-contraction ability that it takes to protect these joints from the force being applied during high velocity and dynamic movements. A simple way to begin to identify if an athlete is not correctly distributing pressure throughout their foot is to take a quick look at their shoes.

If you examine the wear pattern on someone's shoes most of the time you will be able to identify where pressure is being applied during the gait sequence. An individual who exhibits a heavy wear pattern on the lateral edges of the shoe in conjunction with showing minimal usage of the medial toe is someone who you might want to check for past ankle and knee injuries as this person is likely to fall victim to another injury.

Video 1.3 does an excellent job in illustrating the wear patterns that are commonly seen in athletes that exhibit this pattern of movement.