Stop Buying Running Shoes Until You See This

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[00:00:00] How do you choose the right running shoot? Most people look at cushioning brand, maybe stability, and then they pick whatever feels comfortable in the store and looks dope. Here's the problem. Comfortable and dope today doesn't mean healthy in 10 years. I destroyed my Achilles by ignoring the three things that actually matter.

[00:00:17] Let me show you what they are. In this episode, I'll give you a simple system for choosing shoes, but more importantly, I'll show you the one Metric Shoe store is never mentioned. It protects your Achilles long term. Why comfortable shoes make you weaker? How to build a three shoe rotation that keeps you running for decades.

[00:00:33] A free training plan so you don't make the mistakes that destroyed my feet and my ankles. This isn't about finding the perfect shoe, it's about understanding what your feet actually need before it's too late. Let's start with what most people look at first. Cushioning, spoiler. It's not what you think.

[00:00:47] Here I am talking with. Ex pro runner and triathlete Mike trees about the polarizing question of super shoes. And if you should wear them as little or as much as possible, yes, you need to run in them to get used to them. The downside is,

yeah, because they're, they're working a little bit harder than normal shoes, certain muscles might switch off.

[00:01:07] So I think that the downside is that you could get injured if you're running them too often. So I'm on the middle, I'm right in the fence here that I wear them at the moment. I'm getting ready for Iron Man and, uh. Being the sort of person I am. I've got my Asics meta speed, my new balance fuel cell. I got my, you know, my vapor flies, my alpha flies, et I got my hawkers, I'm testing them all out.

[00:01:31] And so yeah, I am using them a lot in training at the moment. Uh, and that's to test them out to see what is the most efficient for me over a marathon in an Ironman after I've ridden a bike, which is totally different from running a 5K. If you use them every day, they have a limited lifespan, uh, that, uh, PBAs, uh, material in there.

[00:01:51] That's lovely. Springy and squashy and responsive. They reckon it, it only lasts about 250 kilometers and then it's gone. Uh, and then it's sort of all the cells in it of squashed together, so you're not getting the performance. So if you overuse them, they won't perform for you on race day. So you either, you know, you need to be rich.

[00:02:11] Uh, if you're gonna wear lots of shoes, base, base season, winter, they're, they're, they're sitting in the cupboard all winter. They're not coming out. You know, I'm looking like, like you, I'm on the trails. I'm on as much natural running as I can find, you know, and, and that's what we, we are designed to, to run on natural territory.

[00:02:29] What these shoes do is they help you run quickly in an unnatural world on, on concrete, which we weren't designed to, to run in. So that's, that's what they're designed for, to make us go. Quicker in an unnatural environment with I like running in a natural environment. Another thing to take in consideration when thinking about performing well as you age is a shoes heel drop.

[00:02:47] Fun fact. Unfortunately, as we age into our fifties and sixties, our Achilles starts wearing out blood flow to the Achilles tendon, decreases and stiffness increases, which raises the risk of injury. Fortunately, you can slow down the slowing down by. Staying active strength training with weighted calf and soleus raises, keeping your ankles mobile and wearing the correct heel drop shoe.

[00:03:08] It wasn't until about five years ago that I started to pay attention to the heel offset or heel drop. This is when your sneakers say four millimeters, eight millimeters, 12 millimeters, c cetera, and as JP Gloria from YouTube defines it, they heel to toe drop in the shoe. More commonly known as heel drop refers to the difference in height of the shoe from the heel region and the front of the foot.

[00:03:32] For example, on one side of the spectrum, women's heels typically are considered to have a high offset between the heel and four foot region, therefore have a high heel drop. Now looking at the other extreme, being barefoot or wearing flat shoes have basically no difference in height. When comparing a. At the heel and forefoot region.

[00:03:56] Therefore, if a shoe does not have any offset, they are typically classified as a zero drop shoe. Now, you may ask yourself, how does heel drop affect the way you run? Here's Millie Hofer, the Meno technical shoe specialist and podiatrist at Balmain Sports Medicine with that answer. So when you're going into a higher drop, it's shifting that higher up the chain, so into your hips and into your knees.

[00:04:20] Think about it like when you're running downhill. And your cords are getting smashed, but your Achilles isn't really an issue. Um, so when we are coming back down from that 12 meter drop, um, obviously it needs to happen gradually. More about the heel drop effects from JP Gloria on YouTube. Heel drop can impact the way forces are distributed in the foot.

[00:04:41] This can be helpful to know when trying to find a shoe that's comfortable for you, especially when a particular region of the leg is bothering you when you run. For example, if you get to. Some pain in the knee. As you run, you can find shoes that are flatter to try to decrease pain in the knee region. Or if you have increased irritability in the Achilles region, you may wanna try a shoe with more of a heel drop to take loads off that area.

[00:05:09] I think heel drops are fascinating as they're a tool to be used for different situations by different people at different times. Alright, so we know about when to use low versus high heel drop shoes. What if you like me and used a relatively low heel drop zero to four millimeters, but now are using a high heel drop eight to 12 so that I could recover from Achilles injury?

[00:05:30] Should I even do it? Millie Hofer with her expert opinion. Given your injury history, it may be that you may not say wear a zero or a four meal drop all of the time, so knowing what I do know, it might be that, okay, maybe the goal is to wear it. Twice a week in your runs and then you might, you know, cruise at a six to eight mil drop.

[00:05:50] And then on your recovery days, that's where you might go back to your 12 mil for a nice easy run. We've covered heel drop and why your feet have more nerve endings than you realize. You're probably thinking, okay, so what shoe should I actually wear? Great questions. So the solution is that I made something super simple and easy.

[00:06:08] A three shoe rotation guide, training plan, sort of. Thing with a cheat sheet in there. It tells you exactly what shoes to wear for easy days, hard days recovery, and it's all based on your injury history and heel drop. No fluff, no brand bias, just what works. You can get it at the QR code here or the link below.

[00:06:27] In the description of show notes, I'll also drop in a bonus cheat sheet on heel drop progressions so you don't blow up your Achilles like I did before you go. If this helped hit like. Hit subscribe. Share it out with one runner that needs to hear it. And you know what? Just comment what your favorite heel drop is.

[00:06:43] I know everyone's gonna talk about their favorite chew. You know what? Throw your favorite chew in there if you want. But what's your favorite heel drop? Because I actually have a favorite that I like that actually doesn't really work with me. But I talk about that in the episode. Now, let's talk about orthotics.

[00:06:57] It's a battle that nobody wants to address. Orthotics are a special shoe inserts that can be used to treat numerous foot conditions. There are many different types of orthotics and they will vary in materials and features based on where you get yours. I've observed that orthotics ironically divides the running community.

[00:07:14] On one hand, the specialists say you should be wearing them as much as possible, and on the other hand, a lot of coaches and elite self coached athletes. Myself in the past say you don't need them. Once you are healthy and healthy runners with strong feet, ankles, and Achilles shouldn't use them. So who's right?

[00:07:31] Well, it all depends. I'd like to say like most things in life, that I'm in the middle. I genetically have lower fat padding under my feet than most people. This means I'll be. Off later, I'll err the side of science and caution, because not being able to run in 20 years is not my objective and doesn't sound fun.

[00:07:49] I like running, so I wanna keep running. Obviously, perform better as I get older. 1% better can't do that if my feet aren't working. Here's Trent with his opinion on fat pads and orthotics. Essentially, fat pad is is finite, similar to to coal in the ground. Once it's gone, it's gone. You, you can't get it back.

[00:08:07] Um, injections and silicon pads, uh, have been unsuccessful. The way I describe it is that an orthotic is used as a protector and a shock absorber for the foot. So instead of the stress going through the foot, we can choose with the stress of different parts of the athletic. I was born with some really good genetics that I'm super grateful for, but fat padding under my feet isn't one of them.

[00:08:31] Your feet are the only part of your body touching the ground for thousands of steps every run, even more if you do half marathons, marathons, ultras. If they're not working right, nothing else matters. Not your VO two max, not

your threshold, not your base training plan or your heart rate, and none of those carbon plated super shoes even matter.

[00:08:49] Take care of them now, or you'll pay for it later. 'cause I'm paying for that now and I don't wish that on anyone. If you haven't grabbed that free three shoe rotation guide yet and training plan, do that again. It's free QR codes right here. The link is in the description below. If you wanna go deeper. The shoe industry has been lying to you about cushioning for years.

[00:09:08] I did a whole episode breaking down the science. Why More cushioning makes you slower and more injured. The video is below if you're on YouTube or if you're somewhere else watching this or listening. Just get it in the show notes or the description. May your feet stay happy and injury free. Peace.