

"BAREFOOT" TRAINING

The essence of training is to restore and strengthen proper movement. All of your body parts work together to create movement and your foot is particularly important. Your foot is where it all begins – it is your main contact point with the ground. The foot is amazing display of natural engineering:

- Your foot has is one of the top three most finely wired areas in the body. Your toes are as sensitive with nerve endings as your lips and fingertips.
- Your feet have pressure sensors in them that they use as feedback for firing stabilization muscles.
- 25% of the bones in your entire body are in found in your feet.
- An arch, which is the strongest structure in nature, is part of your foot. It is made to absorb shock and return energy.

The foot has adapted to thousands of years of running and walking without the aid of modern athletic shoes. This is why I am a proponent of the Barefoot Training mindset – our feet are made to be a part of how we move, not an obstacle that must be overcome.

Here are some shoes that I have found offer a great option to the typical training shoe:

- **Nike Frees**
- **Vibram Five Fingers**
- **Converse All Stars (or the Target One Stars)**

Any shoe that offers minimal arch support and cushioning will do. You will probably find that your feet cramp and fatigue on you at first. This is normal and part of the process of you feet waking up and getting stronger.

If you stabilize and immobilize the foot with a typical training shoe you will throw everything else out of alignment. You can not alter how one area moves without affecting the surrounding areas of the body. Training as close to barefoot as possible will force the feet to get stronger which will improve your overall movement and reduce your risk of overuse injury to the ankles, knees and hips.