

Are Your Flat Feet Causing Back Pain?

What are flat feet/fallen arches?

There are three arches that help maintain the shape of the foot. The medial longitudinal arch (MLA) is the most well-known and the topic of this article. The MLA is located on the inside of the foot going from the base of the great toe to the inside of the heel. There are two main reasons that cause the foot to appear flattened. The first is a congenital condition that you are born with, that causes the sole foot to be flattened. The lack of this arch is known as pes planus. The foot will appear flat both weight bearing and non-weight bearing. The second and most common reason is fallen arches. This is when one develops a normal arch and later the arch drops. With fallen arches, the foot appears flat only during weight bearing or standing. When non-weight bearing, the arch of the foot is visible. Many factors can lead to the falling of the arches which include excess weight gain, pregnancy, trauma, poor foot wear with little support or long hours on feet. The continuous strain on the ligaments of the foot cause it to stretch and become less adaptive.



How do I know if mine are?

First, look at the arch of your foot in the seated position. Is there a visible arch or raising up of the inside of the sole of the foot? Now, stand and look at your foot in a mirror; the inside portion of the foot should not touch the ground. If the foot is flat in both of these positions it may be possible that you have pes planus. If your foot only appears flattened when you are standing it is likely that the arches have fallen when weight bearing.

So what if they are?

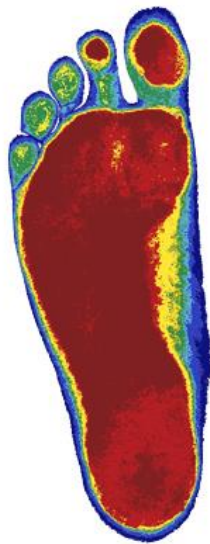
If your arches have fallen, they do not support the foot nor absorb shock the way that they should. That sounds like a big problem for the feet, but the truth of the matter is that there are repercussions for the entire body when this happens. The body is a kinetic chain that is tied together like a whip. What happens in one area can affect the entire body; positively and negatively. The feet are the foundation of the body. Just like a house, if there is a crack in the foundation you will have issues throughout the entire building. When your base of support is not working appropriately, there will be additional problems that occur slowly but surely.

Are my fallen arches causing my LBP?

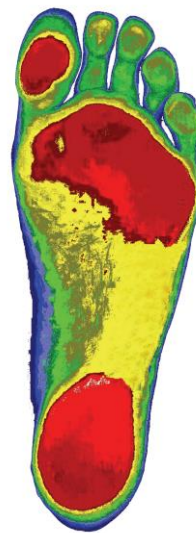
When the arches drop, they do not absorb the shock like they should. The drop also causes rotation of the tibia or shin bone. That places additional stress on the inner aspect of the knee. This leads to pressure on the outer hip and torsion in the pelvis and lower lumbar region of the spine. This process can happen relatively quickly and can have implications throughout the entire spinal column. The fact that the entire kinematic chain can be effected is why it is of dyer importance to have this issue addressed. If you do the home foot assessment above and feel that your arches have fallen please call a doctor of Chiropractic at 301.777.0110 and have them fit your for pelvic stabilizing foot orthotics.

What can I do?

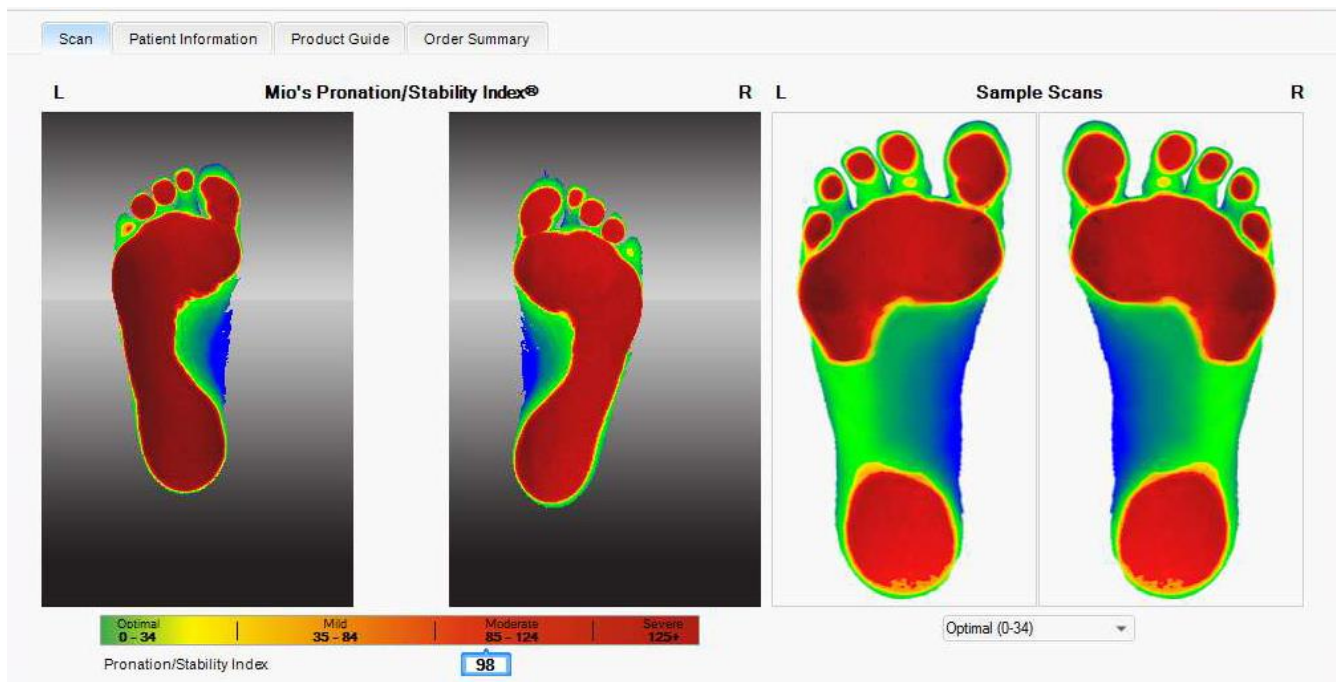
Your chiropractor can do many things to help with fallen arches. This is something that we address on a daily basis. We evaluate the feet as well as the rest of the body to determine if compensation has occurred in any other areas. To treat this condition, manipulation from a chiropractor can be utilized. This will help the foot accommodate the forces better but will not completely revive the arch. Short foot exercises done in the office and at home will help to strengthen the muscles of the foot that can pick up the slack of the lax plantar ligament. The use of ice when the foot is painful will help decrease inflammation. Since the bottom of the foot may be difficult to ice, a frozen water bottle rolled under the foot can be used. Footwear is often overlooked as well. What you wear on your feet can have a tremendous impact on foot mechanics. Avoiding high heeled shoes as well as flip flops can really help. Supportive athletic shoes that are appropriate for your feet are the best option. Your chiropractor can assist you in finding your perfect footwear match. If you have done all of these things and the arches are still flat and painful you may wish to try foot orthotics or inserts. These orthotics are placed in the shoes for additional support and shock absorption. There are over-the-counter options available, however, having a pair custom fit to you would be best. If you are interested in have a custom made orthotic created for you, please contact one of our doctors at Allegany Chiropractic Center. Dr. Audie Klingler and Dr. Teal Tritapoe both specialize in foot orthotic casting and fitting.



Severe Pronation



Normal



If you are experiencing pain or dysfunction, please let us help. We are taking new patients and have same day appointments available. We accept most insurances and for a full list of accepted insurances, please click on the 'Insurances Accepted' tab on the website. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Klingler or Dr. Teal call 301.777.0110 or schedule online at www.alleganychiropractic.com.

Yours in Health and a Happy New Year,

Dr. Teal L. Tritapoe, DC