

Why Do My Feet Go Numb When I Run?

Runners frequently complain of numbness in their feet while running. This could be due to a number of reasons. The most common reason for numbness is improper sneakers that may not be sized correctly. Other reasons may be that the sneakers are laced too tightly. Lastly the patient may have a disease such as [diabetes](#) and a neurological issue has begun in the feet.



The first way of treating numbness in the [foot and ankle](#) of a runner would be to be evaluated by a specialist. A podiatrist can take a look at your shoe gear and see if it is a proper fit. It is very important that your foot fits correctly inside the shoe. It's also important to evaluate the way that a patient walks. We also feel the bony prominences of the foot in the sneaker to make sure that the patient fits correctly into the shoe/sneaker. In our practice we have a [shoe store](#) where we will measure the foot correctly and recommend a choice of sneakers and footwear depending on athletic ability and deformity of the foot.

The next possible problem that we encounter is shoelaces that are too tight. This is easily treated but there are some sneakers that cause moderate irritation on the top of the foot. This is because of where the shoelaces enter at what is called the eyelets. The eyelets are the metal circular openings on each side of the shoe where the laces

weave through. Sometimes just changing the style of shoe where the eyelets are can achieve comfort for the patient.

Lastly if there is numbness, burning, or **pins and needles**, the runner may have a secondary neuropathy. Neuropathy is typically caused by diabetes, but can also be drug or alcohol related. Neuropathy is extremely important to be evaluated for. It can cause a permanent **loss of sensation** that occurs in the foot and can be extremely painful. The first step would be to see a foot specialist who can evaluate the problem effectively. In our practice we can effectively diagnose if a patient has neuropathy with a skin biopsy. This is a very definitive test that we rely on to diagnose this problem. There are a multitude of treatments to treat this problem including medication, physical therapy, and pain management with a take home therapy treatment.

So in review, numbness or tingling sensations noted in a runner can be caused by several factors. The most popular being shoe gear, which can easily be evaluated. In our practice we routinely measure and evaluate patients for proper shoes and/or sneaker. Lastly, do not run long periods with numbness. It is a sign that something is happening to your foot and ankle and should be addressed by a foot specialist.