

Specially designed footwear reduces pain of knee osteoarthritis

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Wearing shoes specifically designed with a novel sole (biomechanical footwear) significantly reduces the pain associated with knee osteoarthritis.

Knee [osteoarthritis](#) affects approximately 275 million people worldwide and in 2017 was estimated to account for 8.3 million years lived with disability. Acetaminophen, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and opioids are most commonly used drugs to treat pain but have limited effectiveness.

Researchers from Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM), the University of Toronto and the University of Bern Switzerland studied 220 participants who suffered with painful osteoarthritis. Half wore the biomechanical footwear while the others wore the "control" shoes. After six months of wearing the shoes, the biomechanical group had a larger decrease in their [pain score](#) measured by the Western Ontario Osteoarthritis Index pain scale.

"These findings provide strong evidence supporting the effectiveness of a new treatment for [knee osteoarthritis](#)," said David Felson, MD, MPH,

professor of medicine at BUSM and coauthor of the study. Felson, a rheumatologist at Boston Medical Center, believes the treatment probably works by re-educating and reconditioning muscles in the legs. "This treatment may help many persons with this disorder."

According to the researchers, not only does it appear to reduce pain in people with osteoarthritis, but may also be effective for some people with hip or back [pain](#).

The authors caution that further research is needed to assess long-term efficacy and safety.

These findings appear online in *JAMA*.

Provided by Boston University School of Medicine

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