

Foot Problems Affect the Knee, Hip & Back

Arch Loss Causes Problems Up the Chain



Flattened arches have enormous effects up the leg and back: the leg twists in, the knee goes out of alignment, the pelvis drops and low back curvature increases. Most people have flattened arches on both sides —a double whammy effect.

If your shoulder hurts it will also affect your neck and upper back. If you hurt your elbow you will also develop problems in your shoulder and wrist. When your arches get flat, it will cause abnormal posture and strain in your knee, hip and back. How? All the joints of the leg and lower spine are connected in a continuous chain, so abnormal changes at any one link in the chain get transferred to all the other links.

One of the most common “abnormal changes” is loss of arch height. When the arch drops towards the floor it causes an inward twist at the ankle. The knee absorbs this twist and points inward. The hip absorbs this twist and rotates inward. The pelvis reacts to this change in the hip by dropping down in front which causes the low back to bow in more. All of these changes cause abnormal stress and strain at each point in the change —and they all started with a fallen arch!

At the knee the inside of the joint gets compressed and the knee cap moves out of alignment, both of which can cause arthritis. At the hip, the front of the joint gets compressed, also inviting arthritis. In the low back, the vertebra shift out of normal alignment so discs can suffer accelerated wear and tear or nerves can be compressed or the spinal joints can develop arthritis. All of these changes do not necessarily cause disease in and of themselves, but they definitely help promote it.

So there are many other reasons to make sure your feet function correctly besides avoiding foot problems. Good joint health, anywhere in the body, begins with good posture and function.