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POSTED: NOV. 14, 2009

# At Foot Solutions shoe stores, Manolos out, healthy in

BY PATRICIA ANSTETT  
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Not all women want stilettos.

Just as some women pour their feet into trendy 4- to 5-inch high heels, a growing number are scouring the Internet and stores for practical and new-tech designs that aim to reduce foot and back problems caused by wearing ill-fitting shoes for years.

Foot Solutions, a global company with 200 U.S. stores, including five in metro Detroit, caters to customers who want comfortable, health-conscious shoes.

Seven of every 10 customers are women.

"It's difficult to get a man to come in to address foot issues," said Joe Dyament, owner of the Foot Solutions store in St. Clair Shoes.

Shirley Swan, a math teacher at Lakeview High School in St. Clair Shores, hasn't worn high heels for years. She has "short, wide feet" and heel pain. With her high insteps and arches, she's had trouble finding shoes.

She found the shoes of her dreams at the St. Clair Shores store: a brand called Chung Shi, that along with another company, MBT, make shoes with rocker-styled soles that aim to properly balance the wearer.

After five minutes in the shoes, "I was dancing around the shore," Swan said. "I fell in love with them." She's talked a roommate and others into buying the style.

MBT and Chung Shi have been the store's most popular sellers. Akaishi sandals, a line that emphasizes "form and function," also is a top choice, Dyament said.

More than a [shoe store](#), the company uses pedorthics, with a staff trained to understand fit footwear and do shoe modifications for people with bunions, hammertoes, fallen arches, heel pain and other problems.

Customers typically spend a half-hour, sometimes more, getting their feet measured and analyzed. Assessments, which include a computer analysis of foot structures, are free. There is a separate fitting room for patients who request privacy, as well as services to expand and modify shoes.

Dyament, a former automotive marketing executive, had his store certified through the American Board for [Certification](#) in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics.

"I'm like a pharmacist for the foot," he explained.

Foot Solutions, with locations in Ann Arbor, Shelby Township, Rochester Hills and Birmingham, carry a full line of diabetic shoes, socks and other products that comply with Medicare guidelines



Left: Store owner Joe Dyament checks out Gloria Lipka's gait with orthotics in her shoes.



A version of this story appears on page 10A of the Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009, print edition of the Detroit Free Press.

### RELATED INFORMATION

#### Seeking used shoes

Five Foot Solutions stores in metro Detroit are asking people to turn in slightly worn shoes during November as part of a national campaign, Soles4Souls. The shoes will be donated to Grace Centers of Hope, a Pontiac program for homeless people. Details: [www.detroitfootsolutions.com](http://www.detroitfootsolutions.com) or 888-348-3668.

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to qualify for [insurance](#) reimbursement. They also make custom-made shoes and sell a line of shoes for runners.

Pam Stanley, a retired child-care worker and nurse from Grosse Pointe Woods, jokes with the staff that while some of the shoes are ugly, she's finally found styles that don't hurt her toes.

She was never a fan of high heels.

"No way," she said.

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