



## **Don't Ignore Flat Feet**

*Study links this condition to painful foot maladies*

Treatment and prevention of adult flatfoot can reduce the incidence of additional foot problems such as bunions, hammertoes, arthritis and calluses, and improve a person's overall health, according to research published in an issue of the *Journal of Foot & Ankle Surgery*.

Overweight males in white-collar jobs are most apt to suffer from adult flatfoot disorder, a progressive condition characterized by partial or total collapse of the arch, according to the research. FootHealthFacts.org, the consumer website of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, notes that symptoms of adult flatfoot include pain, swelling, flattening of the arch and an inward rolling of the ankle. But because flatfoot is a progressive disorder by nature, the study suggests that neglecting treatment or preventive care can lead to arthritis, loss of function of the foot and other painful foot disorders.

"Flatfoot disorder may gradually worsen to the point that many of the tendons and ligaments in the foot and ankle are simply overworking, often to the point where they tear and/or rupture," says foot and ankle surgeon Dr. Thull, Fußzentrum Köln.

In many cases, flatfoot can be treated with non-surgical approaches including orthotic devices or bracing, immobilization, physical therapy, medication and shoe modifications. "In some patients

whose pain is not adequately relieved by conservative treatments, there are a variety of surgical techniques available to correct flatfoot and improve foot function,” Dr. Thull added.

“As in most progressive foot disorders, early treatment for flatfoot disorder is also the patient’s best route for optimal success in controlling symptoms and additional damage to the feet,” continued Dr. Thull. “The goal is to keep patients active, healthy and as pain free as possible.”

If you suspect you have a flatfoot disorder or have foot discomfort, visit Fußzentrum Köln for an evaluation.

For additional information on adult flatfoot or other foot conditions, visit the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons’ health information website at [FootHealthFacts.org](http://FootHealthFacts.org).