

Effects of high heels on body



The knee

The altered posture of walking in high heels places excess force on the inside of the knee — a common site of osteoarthritis among women. One study found that knee joint pressure increased by as much as 26 per-cent when a woman wears heels.

Pump bump

The rigid backs or straps of high heels can irritate the heel, creating a bony enlargement also known as Haglund's deformity.

Ankle injuries

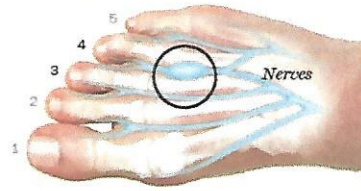
High heels impair balance; a wearer is at a greater risk of falling, which could lead to a sprained or broken ankle.

Metatarsalgia

High heels force the body's weight to be redistributed. Prolonged wear can lead to joint pain in the ball of the foot.

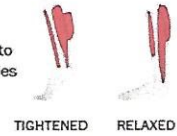
Morton's neuroma

Heel height and a narrow toebox can create a thickening of tissue around a nerve between the third and fourth toes, which can lead to pain and numbness in the toes.



The calf

Calf muscles contract and adjust to the angle of the high heels. Muscles may shorten and tighten.



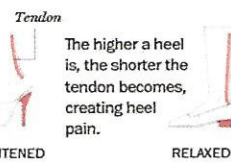
Bunions

Tight-fitting shoes can cause a painful bony growth on the joint at the base of the big toe, which forces the big toe to angle in toward the other toes.



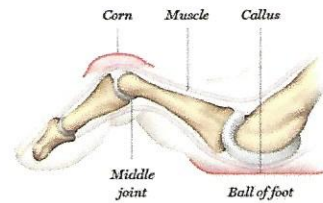
Achilles tendon

When the front of the foot moves down in relation to the heel, the Achilles tendon tightens up.

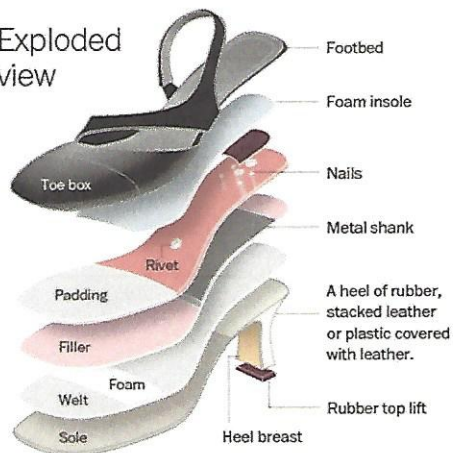


Hammertoes

A narrow toebox pushes the smaller toes into a bent position at the middle joint. Eventually, the muscles in the second, third and fourth toes become unable to straighten, even when there is no confining shoe.



Exploded view



Posture

High heels push the center of mass in the body forward, taking the hips and spine out of alignment (RIGHT).

Pressure

High heels may make legs look longer, but as the heel height goes up, so does the pressure on the forefoot.

Pressure increases on forefoot when wearing:

