

### ■ POSTURE

HIGH-HEELED shoes place the heels unnaturally above the toes and throw your whole body — your hips, shoulders, back and spine — totally out of alignment. In the long-run this can cause severe lower back and leg pain.

### ■ PRESSURE

THE higher the heel, the more pressure there is on the front of the foot (the percentage increase can be seen below). Over long periods this can cause bruising and the problems identified on this page.



### ■ ANKLE INJURIES

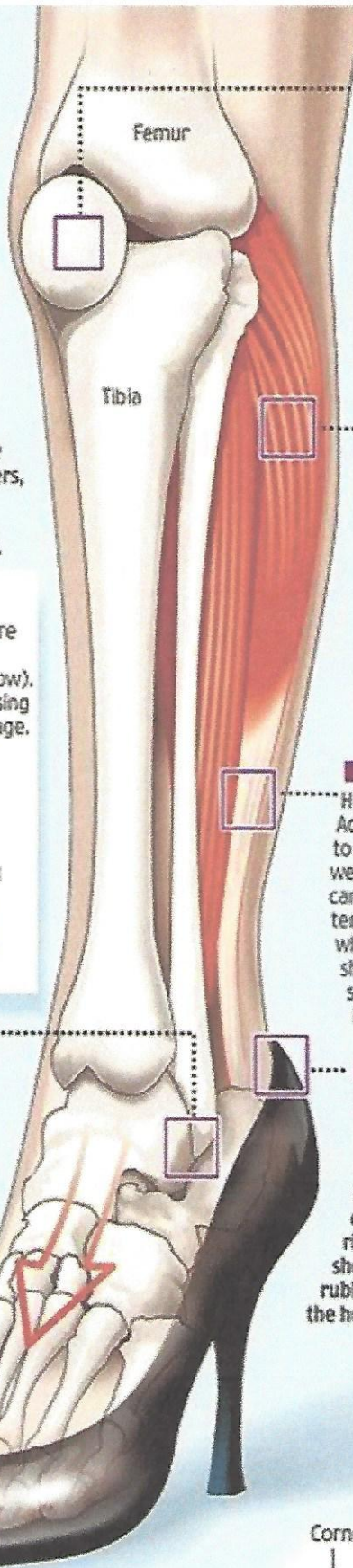
HIGH heels affect your balance and increase your chance of falling — particularly if you are older or overweight. Injuries can include sprained or broken ankles.

### ■ BALL OF THE FOOT PAIN

WEARING high heels causes most of your body weight to be pushed forward on to the ball of the foot. This can lead to a condition called metatarsalgia — pain in the area of the foot just before the toes. Age increases your susceptibility.

### ■ HAMMERTOES

SQUEEZING feet into ill-fitting high heels can cause the toes to curl up to fit the footwear. Eventually the toes, but usually the second one, become so misshapen they can't be straightened — even when not wearing shoes.



### ■ THE KNEE

TEETERING around in stilettos throws the body forward and puts increased pressure on the inside of the knee — one study found the pressure was up to 26 per cent greater. This can lead to arthritis, the painful degenerative joint disease, in the knee.

### ■ THE CALF

MUSCLES in the calf naturally contract when you walk in high heels. However, long-term wear can cause them to shorten and tighten permanently — leading to pain in the ball of the foot, or knee, hip or back pain.

### ■ ACHILLES TENDON

HEELS put pressure on the Achilles tendon — causing it to shorten and tighten. If you wear heels constantly, this can actually shorten the tendon permanently, so that when when you wear flat shoes the tendon becomes stretched and inflamed, known as tendinitis.

### ■ PUMP BUMP

ALSO known as Haglund's deformity, this is a bony enlargement on the back of the heel. It is caused by straps and the rigid backs of pump-style shoes (hence the name) rubbing and irritating the heel.

