



Fit Feet helps Special Olympics athletes step lively on the playing field, and in everyday life. Many athletes suffer from foot and ankle pain, or deformities that impair their performance. In fact, up to 50 percent of Special Olympics athletes experience one or more preventable or treatable foot conditions that can affect their sports participation. Often, these individuals are not fitted with the best shoes and socks for their particular sport. To alleviate these problems, volunteer podiatrists work with athletes to evaluate problems of the feet, ankles and lower extremity biomechanics.

Fit Feet was developed in collaboration with the American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine (AAPSM) and the Federation of International Podiatrists (FIP).

IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT – New York:

Fit Feet screenings have found that a large percentage of Special Olympics athletes have untreated foot conditions.

66% Have gait abnormalities

62% Have skin and nail conditions

29% Have bone deformation

41% Of Special Olympics athletes in the U.S. are wearing the wrong size shoe

GOALS:

1. Increase access to foot care for Special Olympics athletes, as well as all people with intellectual disabilities.
2. Raise podiatrists' awareness of foot concerns of people with special needs, including difficulties involved in accessing treatment.
3. Provide a list of regional podiatrists who care for people with special needs to all athletes who participate in the Special Olympics Fit Feet program.
4. Develop a body of knowledge about proper foot care of children and adults with special needs.

In The Field

Chanveha Sun, a 14-year old from Cambodia was born with a congenital defect clinically known as “subluxed and reversed hallux,” Chanveha’s big toe has been bent backwards on his foot since he was born.

Healthy Athletes diagnosed his condition while he was competing at the World Games in Athens. Doctors found that despite not having any pain, Chanveha’s shoes provided practically no cushioning for his foot, clearly affecting his sports performance.

Improvising to find a solution, Carine, clinical director for Fit Feet in Belgium, found some carpeting remnants and managed to construct insoles for Chanveha’s shoes. The young athlete said the shoes were much more comfortable with the new insole.

Chanveha went on to win bronze in his 50-metre final – **clocking 10.15 seconds, more than half a second better than his run in the preliminaries.**

