LISTENING

Two Studies Give a Lift to Running Barefoot

SILVER ENGLISH COACH

This is the VOA Special English Health Report.

Two new studies suggest that modern running …… could increase the risk of injuries to runners.

One study involved sixty-eight healthy young women and men who ran at least twenty-four ……a week. The runners were observed on a treadmill …… Sometimes they wore running shoes. Other times they ran barefoot.

Researchers from the JKM Technologies …… in Virginia, the University of Virginia and the University of Colorado did the study.

They found that running shoes create more stress that could damage ……, hips and ankle joints than running barefoot. They observed that the effect was even …… than the effect reported earlier for walking in high heels.

The study appeared in the official scientific journal of the American Academy of Physical Medicine.

The other study appeared in the journal Nature. It compared ……. in the United States and Kenya. The researchers were from Harvard University in Massachusetts, Moi University in Kenya and the University of Glasgow in Scotland.

They divided the runners into three groups. One group had always run …….. Another group had always run with shoes. And the third group had changed to shoeless running.

Runners who wear shoes usually come …… heel first. That puts great …… on the back of the foot. But the study found that barefoot runners generally land on the front or middle of their foot. That way they ease into their landing and avoid …… their heel.

Harvard's Daniel Lieberman led the study. He says the way most running shoes are designed may explain why …… who wear them land on their heels. The heel of the shoe is…… and heavier than other parts of the shoe, so it would seem more likely to come down first. Also, the heel generally has thick material …… it to soften landings.

But the researchers do not suggest that runners immediately start running barefoot. They say it takes some…… . And there can be risks, like running when your feet are too cold to feel if you get injured.

The study was partly supported by Vibram, which makes a kind of footwear that it says is like running barefoot. The findings have gotten a lot of attention. But the …… say there are many problems in the way the …… has reported on their paper. So they have tried to explain their findings on a Harvard Web site. For a link, go to voaspecialenglish.com.

And that's the VOA Special English Health Report, written by Caty Weaver. I'm Steve Ember.

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