Training Tip #15
Choosing New Shoes

During your training you should be looking for a new pair of shoes. You should plan on having two worn in pairs of shoes for the Susan G. Komen 3-Day®. The best way to find the shoe for you is to seek a technical running store or full-service shoe store and get fitted. Walking and running are not the same. In the walking stride, your foot strikes the ground further back on the heel with your toes higher in the air than in the running stride. A walking shoe should have a fairly low, rounded or beveled heel. In fact, a thick, squared-off running heel can lead to shin splints because, as the toes slap down, the foot pulls on the shin muscle. A walker also rolls further off the toes at the end of each stride than a runner. Therefore, your shoe needs to be flexible through the ball of the foot.

Your gait will also determine what kind of shoe you need. Check your old shoes for signs of overpronation or increase in an inner roll of your heel every time your foot strikes the ground. Set your shoes side by side on a table and view them from behind. If the heel cups lean in toward each other, then you probably overpronate. Choose a walking shoe with a medial post or motion control feature. If the heel cups lean outward, you probably underpronate. Choose a walking shoe that is well cushioned with air, gel or other high-density foam, in the heel.

In summary:

1. Walking and running shoes are not the same. Choose a shoe that works for you. Some types of running shoes may be ok for long distance walking but others may not.

2. Choose shoes with a low, rounded or beveled heel.

3. There should be a noticeable bend upward at the toe of the shoe (called toe spring).

4. Check for arch support: a midfoot stability feature or a shoe with a full ground contact bottom.

5. Overpronators: Choose a supported heel or consider adding an over-the-counter orthotic insert.

6. Underpronators: Choose a shoe with extra cushion or consider adding an over-the-counter orthotic insert.

7. Buy your shoes from a reputable technical walking or running store not a department store.