Opinions about running shoes in runners and non-runners.

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were (1) to compare perceptions of runners and non-runners about running footwear, and (2) to identify where runners seek information when selecting their shoes. Using an online survey, we collected data on demographics and perceptions about running footwear in runners and in non-runners. Runners answered additional questions about their training, running experience, and sources of information. Questions about running shoes were the same for both groups. These addressed perceptions about the influence of footwear on injuries, performance and biomechanics, as well as perceptions about appropriate footwear features for novice runners, children or overweight individuals. In total, 1601 responses (59% runners, 41% non-runners) were analyzed. With the exception of kids' running shoes recommendations, runners and non-runners shared similar perception towards running shoes. In addition, runners mostly relied on running stores, sports stores, the internet, running clubs or magazines when seeking information about running shoes. Some opinions of runners may not be in line with the current literature. These results underline the fact that runners are mostly subject to popular belief rather than modern recommendations. This led to the promotion of enhancing runner perception with up-to-date recommendations about running shoes. However, it is not clear yet whether this could be beneficial for runner's performance or running-related-injury prevention.

Keywords: online survey, runner, footwear, belief, knowledge.