My Breakup With High Heels

I had to break up with my love of heels and wear flats because of severe chemo-induced peripheral neuropathy in both feet.

November 17, 2019 By Megan-Claire Chase

I braved the crowd and returned a jacket to the mall this afternoon. As I'm walking through Macy's and other department stores, my eyes couldn't help but see all the fabulous and sparkling high heels. They were on every corner — high heels, low heels, boots and wedges. I can honestly say my heart hurt a bit.

There was a time pre-cancer when I loved, LOVED wearing all kinds of heels. When I had my statuesque body, adding heels just added to the flair. I could strut my stuff like nobody's business too. I could even run and do cartwheels in heels. Even when the weight started piling on, I still loved wearing my heels.

When I saw those heels today, I had a million tiny flashbacks to all the heels, especially heeled boots I used to wear. I would pretend I was on the runway and walk with long strides, swaying my hips.

Thanks to the Taxol chemo, those days are long gone. I had to break up with my love of heels and wear flats because of severe chemo-induced peripheral neuropathy in both feet. I literally do not feel the upper balls of my feet through my toes. And do you know what I discovered? It's super hard to find really cute and stylish flats, especially when wearing a dress or suit. That height I used to love is gone.

My long strides in heels have given way to short, quick steps in flats. I no longer feel graceful. I tried to push past my feet and make them work it in heels and fell. I still have the cute heeled booties in the closet. I wobbled so badly that it was embarrassing. Landing flat on my butt really hurt my pride.

Yes, flats are more comfortable but I really miss that special feeling when finding the perfect pair of heels.

I've had to modify so many areas in my life post-cancer. When I tell people this, they completely invalidate me and tell me to just "try harder," or, "You can do it if you push yourself more." Neuropathy is serious, and my case is severe. No amount of turmeric, acupuncture or B12 is going to help. The nerves in my feet are literally dead. Dead. They never tingle or hurt like my hands, which also have neuropathy. My feet get super cold. I honestly believe that's why I don't have hot

flashes while in medically induced menopause. I get cold flashes.

So, while many get dressed up for holiday parties in sparkling outfits with fabulous heels to match, I'll be the one in the corner with the short legs in flats staring wishfully at your feet.

Until next time,

Warrior Megsie

This post originally appeared on Life on the Cancer Train. It is republished with permission.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/blog/breakup-high-heels