

# Long Standing CHALLENGES

Several years ago, researchers at Cornell University and Michigan State University studied the success and failure rates of restaurants West in three markets over a 10-year period. They concluded that nearly a third of the restaurants failed within the first year. In 3 years, half of them were out of business, and at the end of 10 years nearly three-quarters of the restaurants that had opened a decade before were gone.

Terrance Brennan, chef and owner of the Picholine restaurant on New York's Upper West Side, is one of the success stories. After 20 years, Brennan says he plans to keep the restaurant going as long as he can stand it — literally.

Brennan has the same problem many chefs have: he is on his feet as much as 12 hours per day, walking over soiled, hard and slippery kitchen floors. His shoes take a beating, as do his feet, his legs, his knees, and sometimes his spirits.

According to an article in *The New York Times* (Suzanne Hamlin, "Chefs and Shoes: A Bond Forged in Battle," November 5, 1997), this problem is so bad for many foodservice workers that they have given

up looking for shoes in typical shoe stores. Instead, many try having shoes custom made or go to medical or kitchen supply companies looking for specially made shoes that offer extra cushioning and pain relief.

Painful lower ligaments are common throughout the industry for everyone from chefs in the kitchen to bussers clearing tables. A big part of the problem, as mentioned earlier, is that foodservice workers are on their feet for long hours. Additionally, in many restaurants, concrete is the flooring of choice in cook and prep areas. It tends to be easier to clean and last forever, but concrete can wreak havoc on feet, knees and legs.

*Understanding the important relationship chefs, their shoes and the matting on wh*



**"IT'S NOT THE WALKING... IT'S THE STANDING."**

Brennan has tried all kinds of

shoes purchase places. One of the leading causes of injury in restaurants — no safety. Slips and falls are the leading cause of injury in restaurants — not only for the foodservice workers but for the foodservice workers. Shoes have to be resistant to grease and oil. If not, they can be a safety hazard.

However, unfortunately, many chefs develop problems with their feet. For many chefs, that's the killer.

An example of this is a San Francisco chef who was "too busy" to notice his feet were hurting for several years. However, one day he found he couldn't wear his shoes. He ended up where they found an orange on

**HOW TO KEEP**  
According to a New York

**ATI ATRIX INTERNATIONAL INCORPORATED** THE ULTRA FINE vacuum cleaner company!  
www.atrix.com (800) 222-6154 sales@atrix.com

<p><b>RRP HEPA VACUUM SYSTEM</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideal for large volumes of dry chemical, asbestos, mold, lead paint dust, or other hazardous particulate</li> <li>• True 5-Gallon HEPA filter</li> </ul>	<p><b>OMEGA HEPA RRP VACUUM</b></p>   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A self contained HEPA filter cartridge for lead dust, mold spores, etc.</li> </ul> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">Optional Back Pack Harness</p>	<p><b>"MIGHTY MOUTH" No Clog Vacuum/Sweeper</b></p>  <p>Efficiently pick up...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popcorn, Pretzels, &amp; Candy</li> <li>• Nails &amp; Screws</li> <li>• Straws, Napkins, etc.</li> </ul>
--	---	--

who specializes in sports medicine, chefs are particularly vulnerable to foot problems. Support is crucial: "If you stand all day, you need to wear a shoe with cushioned support that evenly balances the whole foot."

Further, he suggests getting an arch support for the shoe, "but a soft one that gives, not [one] made of steel or leather." He suggests chefs and other foodservice workers have arch supports specially made from molds for the workers' feet. These are designed to fit snugly and comfortably for each individual wearer.

However, some suggest foodservice workers who must stand for long periods of time must look beyond just their shoes and try to cushion the floor below. "The foodservice industry has actually evolved into one of our biggest markets," says Christopher Tricozzi, vice president of sales and marketing for Crown Mats and Matting, one of the oldest matting manufacturers in the country.

"Originally, the mats were designed mostly for drainage, to allow water, grease, oil and other items to fall beneath the walking area. Now we also design them to help alleviate some of the pain foodservice workers [experience] after standing for long hours."

Tricozzi is referring to antifatigue matting systems. An antifatigue mat

is not a soft mat; instead, it is specially engineered to provide both a cushion and a bounce when walked upon.

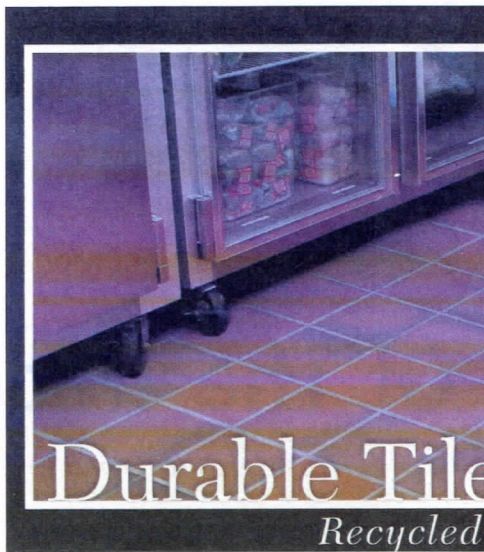
The combination "increases body movement, disperses the worker's weight more evenly over the surface, and helps improve blood flow and circulation," he says. "This type of matting system was originally developed for workers in industrial locations but lends itself just as well to foodservice facilities."

**IS FASHION OUT THE WINDOW?**

As incredible as it may sound, some chefs will bear the foot, ankle, knee and leg pain in order to wear high-fashion shoes while they work. Many say that style fits in with the ambiance of their restaurants and the high-end elegance they are trying to create.

"I wouldn't say chefs can wear high-fashion shoes and experience no pain if they simply install antifatigue mats," says Tricozzi. "However, if they wear comfortable, appropriate shoes and install [antifatigue] mats, they should have healthier feet and experience less pain." ♦

Dawn Shoemaker is a frequent contributor to *Restaurant Facility Business*. She may be reached at [info@alturasolutions.com](mailto:info@alturasolutions.com).



**Durable Tile**  
*Recycled*

ENVIROQUARRY® is a slip resisting ceramic pre-consumer recycled content of over 50%. EN is 1/2" thick, extremely durable, and kiln flashed variation and added appeal. ENVIROQUARRY® most demanding applications. Use in restaurant dining rooms, restrooms and entryway

**ENVIROQUARRY**  
A PRODUCT OF METROPOLITAN CERAMIC

1.800.325.3945 | [metroceram.com](http://metroceram.com)

**Glass Repair & Replacement**



- Over 400 Self-Performing Locations
- Full Service Glass Company
- No Additional Markup - Saves you 10-20%
- Work Directly with our Shops
- Standardized Pricing
- Centralized Billing
- Certified Technicians
- Commitment to High Quality Products and Services



**GLASS DOCTOR**  
HOME • AUTO • BUSINESS  
We fix your panes!®

[www.glassdoctor.com](http://www.glassdoctor.com)  
Independently Owned & Operated Franchise

**800-396-6146**

**For Repair and Maintenance**



**WE SPEAK TECH**

Trained Tech Specialists are ready to help research your parts and process your order. Call them today.



**FRANKLIN MACHINE PRODUCTS**

Phone: 800-257-7737 • 1-609-267-3700 • 24-Hour Fax: 800-255-9866  
[techspecialists@fmponline.com](mailto:techspecialists@fmponline.com) • [FMPONLINE.COM](http://FMPONLINE.COM)

©2011 Franklin Machine Products