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Study Indicates Oxygen Consumption Similarity Among Athletes in Barefoot and Minimalist Footwear Conditions

kigo footwear Sponsors Study of Energy Expenditure in Walking and Running

September 20, 2011, Atlanta, GA and Lafayette, LA – The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette have released initial reports from a collaborative study of the energy expenditure of walking and running in traditional and minimalist footwear and barefoot. kigo footwear, minimalist shoes designed for lifestyle and athletics, provided footwear for participants.

The study, *Effect of Training in Minimalist Footwear on Oxygen Consumption during Walking and Running*, was designed to gauge the impact of minimalist footwear on oxygen consumption (a measure of energy expenditure) during activity. The purpose of the study was to enhance the body of scientific information about the use minimalist footwear, which to date has been largely focused on biomechanics.

Lead scientists Dr. David Bellar and Dr. Justin Shroyer tested the impact of training with kigo footwear on oxygen consumption during walking and running. The study involved nine apparently healthy college-aged students who had no previous experience with walking or running in minimalist footwear. After assessing baseline fitness levels, the subjects underwent metabolic testing during walking, light running and moderate running, all in traditional trainers, kigo footwear and barefoot.

Once baselines were established, the participants underwent a progressive five weeks of training with kigo footwear. Each week added a 30-minute session, beginning with one run session in Week One, and progressing to five 30-minute sessions by Week Five. Participants repeated metabolic testing for all speeds and footwear conditions.

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During initial assessment at Week One, oxygen consumption during exercise in minimalist footwear resulted in significantly greater oxygen consumption at all speeds compared to the barefoot condition. These early findings were closely comparable to a traditional running shoe.

Over the five-week testing period, energy efficiency improved rapidly. At post-testing, oxygen consumption during walking and running in minimalist footwear was not significantly different from expenditure in the barefoot condition.

“The main finding was that before experience, running in kigo footwear was more similar to a running shoe in terms of energy expenditure, but after five weeks it had become no different than running barefoot,” stated Bellar. “And qualitatively, all subjects reported that they intended to continue to use kigo footwear for running after the conclusion of the study.”

The study indicates that after a short period of training, activity in minimalist shoes is as metabolically efficient as walking or running barefoot. Corresponding heart rate data demonstrated similar results to the study, adding credence to the findings.

Formal findings will be submitted during the American College of Sport Medicine Annual Meeting being held in June 2012 in San Francisco.

About kigo footwear

kigo is footwear for the barefoot lifestyle and minimalist athletics. Shoes that are stylish enough for everyday wear, sturdy enough for athletics and almost as lightweight and flexible as bare make kigo footwear the shoe of choice for barefoot lifestyle. Every kigo footwear offering is constructed to be as good for the Earth as for the body, with responsible construction that features lightweight, durable post-consumer and non-toxic materials. Please visit us at www.kigofootwear.com.

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