

Walk a mile in these shoes

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Pluggz: These women's quilted ballet flats sell for \$139 online.

Sharon Whiteley remembers the days of running through airports in pointy-toed heels.

Those days are long gone.

Whiteley, a former Tucsonan, created a line of good-for-you-shoes that hit the market in November. Her Tucson-based company Pluggz offers a variety of designs, each centered around a black-carbon rubber plug in the sole.

“It’s not some newfangled device or magnet,” Whiteley, a longtime entrepreneur, says. “It just allows the conduction of the Earth’s energy into your body when you’re walking on grass, soil, unsealed tile and even city sidewalks.”

Grounding, or earthing, studies the balance of energy between the Earth’s electric field and the body’s, though there is not extensive research.

Electrons pass between the ground and the body better when barefoot, Whiteley says. Proponents of earthing say it supplements this shoe-induced electron deficiency and can improve energy

levels, ease stress and reduce inflammation. Whiteley says the rubber plug in Pluggz aids those benefits.

Slip on ballet flats, flip-flops or loafers, and don't worry about sacrificing style for comfort. Memory foam and rubber soles make sure of that.

“A lot of great-looking shoes out there torture us, but a lot of the comfortable shoes out there are outdoorsy or look dowdy,” Whiteley says. “Then there are the shoes that are good for your body but look orthopedic. We wanted a shoe that was great for your body but looked great.”

That's part of Whiteley's whole vision for wellness — it's hard to be a grouch when your shoes make you feel pretty.

Coming seasons will bring wedges, walking shoes and desert boots. Men's flip-flops and a soon-to-be-launched close-toed shoe means these slippers won't just be for Cinderella anymore.

Learn more about Pluggz at Pluggz.com

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