

OUTDOOR EXTREMES - BUY

Newton's new shoes offer feel of barefoot running

By Jason Blevins

DENVER POST STAFF WRITER

May 7, 2007

Isaac Newton was the first to postulate that every action generates an equal and opposite reaction. But it took a cadre of runners from Boulder to squeeze that elemental law into a sneaker. The new line of shoes from Newton Running features a design that takes the energy absorbed from a runner's impact with the ground and turns it into a forward-propelling motion. Founded by elite runners in Boulder after nearly a decade of research and design - and seven patents - the Newton sneakers hit the market two months ago with the promise of mimicking the advantages of barefoot running. The lightweight, pricey shoes feature a membrane that is stretched by lugs reaching into air chambers in the sole to absorb impact. Newton claims its shoes absorb 25 percent more shock than traditional foam soles. When the so-called "active membrane" retracts as the foot rolls onto its toes, the energy of the impact is converted into forward motion. The shoes require that runners land on the forefoot or midsole as opposed to heel-first landings, a technique long evangelized by barefoot runners.

