

Patient information: You and your foot orthoses

Your symptoms are consistent with or partly caused by mechanical problems associated with posture and the way your foot functions when walking.

These problems can sometimes be corrected with the use of functional orthoses. These are designed to improve foot function and posture, thereby eliminating or reducing any abnormal movement and forces that may have caused your injury.

Often orthoses will form only part of your treatment and you may also be prescribed specific exercises. If this is the case, it is important that you do these exercises, as without them your recovery may be delayed.

Breaking in your orthoses

It takes time to adjust to having insoles placed in the shoes so they should be worn in gradually. You may feel a little discomfort in the feet or legs during the early stages of wearing the insoles as the muscles adapt to new positions and functions.

Start by wearing the insoles for one hour the first day, increasing by 1 hour a day until they can be tolerated all day i.e. 1st day – 1 hour, 2nd day – 2 hours, 3rd day – 3 hours, etc.

If you cannot wear them for the prescribed period for any day **do not** continue to wear them on that day. For example: if you should be using the insoles for 3 hours and they make your feet ache after 2 hours, take them out of your shoes at 2 hours.

The next day, stick to the length of time you felt comfortable for and only increase the wearing time by 30 minutes, **if they are comfortable**.

If you are going to wear them whilst participating in any sporting activities you will probably need a different adjustment programme. If this is the case, you will need to discuss this with your podiatrist before wearing the orthoses when playing sport or training. In most cases you should not wear your orthoses for playing sport until you are comfortably wearing them all day for normal walking.

Sometimes orthoses need to make a significant adjustment to gait and some people can experience more than the usual adjustment 'pains'. If this happens to you, stop wearing the insoles and if an appointment has not already been arranged, please telephone for a review appointment with the podiatrist, so that together you can review the insoles and your breaking-in programme.

If you experience any new foot, ankle, knee, hip or back pains, you should stop wearing the insoles immediately.

If you do not follow these instructions, then you may find it takes longer to get used to your orthoses and to get any benefit from them.

Care of your insoles

Insoles for adults usually last for about one year but this will vary depending on the amount of use. Casted orthoses usually last longer. Normally, insoles are made of synthetic materials that can be cleaned by wiping with a damp soapy cloth. Allow them to dry naturally. Do not place them on direct heat sources as this may distort the material they are made of.

Follow up

Your podiatrist will normally review your progress after about 16 weeks or as arranged with you.

One pair of insoles or casted orthoses will be issued; these should be swapped between different shoes. They will not be replaced until worn out or no longer performing as expected. If additional insoles are required these will have to be purchased. Review appointments and orthoses replacement for children, will be advised by the podiatrist.

Problems or questions

If you have any problems or questions, please telephone to request a review appointment with the podiatrist who assessed you.

Telephone number for review appointments
with Podiatry biomechanics:

St Mary's Hospital, Newport	01983 534933
Ryde Health & Wellbeing Centre, Ryde	01983 618444
Arthur Webster Clinic, Shanklin	01983 862367
West Cowes Health Centre, Cowes	01983 290583