

Patient information leaflet: Prescribed orthotic footwear

You have been supplied with orthotic footwear which is designed specifically to support your feet, improve comfort, and accommodate your foot and ankle needs. These shoes may look and feel different from standard footwear, so it's important to build up wear gradually and follow the advice below.

Building up wear time

- Start by wearing your footwear for one to two hours on the first day
- Gradually increase wear time by one to two hours per day, depending on comfort
- Most people can wear their shoes comfortably all day within one to two weeks
- Mild aching or muscle fatigue is normal as your body adjusts to the improved support and alignment

If you feel discomfort

- Remove the shoes and check your feet for any redness or pressure areas
- Try wearing them for a shorter time the following day
- If soreness persists for more than a few days, contact your orthotist or clinician before continuing to wear them

Skin and foot checks

Check your feet daily, especially if you have diabetes, poor sensation, or circulation problems. Look for:

- • Redness or pressure marks that do not fade within 30 minutes
- • Blisters, rubbing, or cuts on toes, heels, or ankles
- • Swelling, new pain, or skin breakdown

If you notice any of these, stop wearing the shoes and contact your clinician immediately.

Helpful tips for using your orthotic footwear

- Always wear the correct pair together – don't mix with other shoes
- Ensure both laces or fastenings are properly secured for best support
- Use thin, seamless socks to reduce friction and improve comfort
- Check your shoes before each wear for stones, creases, or anything inside that could cause pressure

Shoe care

- Clean with a damp cloth; avoid soaking or machine washing
- Air dry naturally – keep away from direct heat such as radiators or fires
- Use a shoehorn if needed to help with putting on your shoes
- Replace worn or damaged laces as needed

Storage

- Store your shoes in a cool, dry place, away from direct sunlight
- Avoid leaving them near heaters or in damp conditions
- Bring both your footwear and orthoses to any review appointments

When to contact your clinician

Please get in touch if:

- You develop persistent pain, redness, or skin irritation
- Your shoes feel too tight, loose, or unevenly worn
- You notice changes in walking or balance
- You think your footwear or orthoses need adjustment or repair

Review and maintenance

Your orthotist will review your footwear as needed. Ensure regular checks so the shoes continue to fit well and provide proper support. Orthotic footwear typically lasts 12–24 months, depending on use and condition. Current policy for adults is two serviceable pairs of shoes supplied initially and then either a repair or a new pair supplied once a year, with a valid open referral. If a new pair is required, an older pair will require condemning in line with UHB policy.

Remember: Build up wear gradually, check your feet daily and contact your orthotist if you have any problems or concerns. Your footwear has been prescribed to help you stay comfortable, supported, and mobile. Your orthotic referral is valid and open for three years.

Accessibility

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