

## Birmingham Foot Clinic Advice Guide

### Foot Support Using Orthoses

#### Answers to Common Questions

Orthoses are in-shoe devices which make your foot take weight in a different way and adjust the way that you walk, to help ease your discomfort.

Orthoses may be pre-made to be issued on the day, or may be specially moulded on a cast of your foot. Because they are shaped to support your foot, they should be comfortable - although they will take some time to get used to.

They do not “cure” the problem, but adjust the way you walk on your feet in order to reduce the problem to a manageable level.

Orthoses often take a while to get used to and are not a “quick fix”. They may need to be adjusted, in order to be right.

You may notice a number of things which are usually temporary:

- There will be a sensation of a lump under the arch of your foot. This is unavoidable but as long as it does not feel so large as to cause excessive rubbing or a blister, it is nothing to worry about.
- There will be a tendency for you to feel that your heel is raised and that you are coming out of the heel of the shoe as you walk. This is because your foot does not flatten and turn out quite so much as you walk. This causes the heel to come off the ground slightly earlier with each step and so causes the feeling of the foot being looser in the heel of the shoe. This usually goes away in a few weeks, as your calf muscles and other tissues adjust. This is the reason you may have had advice on calf stretching exercises.

In order to give your new orthoses the best chance of being successful, it is important that you follow the advice you have been given.

You will need to wear “sensible shoes”; low heel shoes with laces (or a strap), that adjust for your foot. The toe of the shoe should be rounded and deep enough for your toes.

Remember that you must not wear the devices all the time, until you have got used to them. You should do this gradually, wearing them for half an hour the first day, an hour the second day. Gradually build this up by half an hour more each day. If at any time they seem to be causing you a problem you must

reduce the daily use back to the previous level and if the problem persists, contact the department for advice.

These devices will usually last up to a few years before they wear out. It is advisable to have your device and prescription reviewed every two years unless advised otherwise. Appointments for follow up can be made using the address and telephone number below.

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