

CUSTOM MOLDED FOOT ORTHOSES
USE & CARE INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions are intended to help ensure successful use of your Custom Molded Foot Orthoses (CMFOs), sometimes called *Shoe Inserts, Foot Orthotics (FOs)*. If you received soft accommodative diabetic inserts please see the instructions for Diabetic Shoes and Inserts. Foot orthoses are designed to alter the foot alignment in order to improve function and reduce internal stresses associated with poor mechanics. Additionally, they are designed to redistribute weight-bearing pressure from sensitive areas to more tolerant areas of the foot. These changes in foot alignment cause postural changes that impact the knees, hips and spine, and it can take several weeks to fully adjust to the changes.

While being fitted with your CMFOs, your Orthotist will instruct you on how to wear and use your orthoses effectively. Some points to remember:

SOCKS

1. Always wear clean, medium weight, socks with your foot orthoses.
2. Smooth out all wrinkles before putting on the shoes, making sure that they have not been pulled too tightly over your toes. Your toes should be free to move.

SHOES

1. Appropriate shoes are vital to the success of your inserts. Wear only shoe with Laces (preferred) or velcro closures: no loafers or slip-ons. Your laces/velcro must be snug, but not tight to prevent the foot from moving around in the shoe.
2. Sneakers and/or wide shoes with a high toe box (extra-depth), and removable insoles are optimal.
3. It may be necessary to get a larger and wider shoe, anywhere from ½ to a 1 size longer and one width larger than your current shoes to accommodate the increased thickness of the insert.
4. If your shoes need to have modifications to the sole (lifts or wedges), look for soles made of a solid material (no air or gel soles). Notify the sales clerk/manager of your needs as they may have suggestions. Make sure to get their permission in advance to return the shoes if, after our inspection, we find that we are not able to modify the sole materials. Get a name and save your receipt.

DONNING AND DOFFING

1. Insert the CMFO into your shoe, confirming that the correct orthosis is in the correct shoe. Slide it forward to the toe, press the heel down then back against the heel counter. Inspect that they are lying flat and smooth within the shoe.
2. Loosen the lacing to allow your forefoot to slide gently over the surface of the insert as you don your shoes in the normal fashion. Forcing your foot into tight shoes will damage the inserts over time.

3. Confirm that your foot is properly positioned in the shoe with the heel back firmly against the heel counter before securing the laces, or Velcro.

WEAR: BREAK-IN AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

1. Getting used to your foot orthoses: Similar to a new pair of shoes, correctly fitted CMFOs may seem uncomfortable at first. In general, Foot Orthoses are designed to apply specific pressures to realign the foot and ankle. The amount of force (and pressure) is related to your body mass and the degree of instability and misalignment to be controlled.
2. During the first 1-2 weeks, you should alternate times in and out of your CMFOs as recommended by your orthotist. Initially, wear them one hour at a time, three times a day.
3. Increase wearing time only as tolerated, but typically wearers are able to add an hour or two each day until they are able to wear them all day.
4. This adaptation period typically takes 10-14 days, but it is not unusual for it to take up to 6 weeks to become fully acclimated to them, depending on your foot (mis)alignment and the corrections built into the device.
5. Your arches may feel “achy” after longer periods of wear. A short break from the inserts may be required: discontinue the insert for 1-2 days then slowly reintroduce them increasing wear time as tolerated.
6. During the break-in period your skin should be inspected every time you remove your shoes
7. Make note of any localized redness, especially over bony areas. Redness which is spread out over a wide fleshy area is usually not cause for concern, but should fade within 30 minutes. Contact our office with any concerns regarding discomfort or skin pressure within the brace (i.e. discoloration which does not fade, callus formation, blisters).

CARE AND CLEANING

1. The orthosis may be gently wiped clean (inside and out) with a soft cloth using water and a mild detergent. Do not scrub with anything abrasive. Rinse thoroughly and towel dry. It can be immediately placed back into your shoe and worn.
2. Do not launder or soak the inserts. Do not place the inserts in a dishwasher
3. Avoid all heat sources, as they can damage or deform the device. Do not place near a heater to dry. Do not leave in the car.

Compliance with instructions and follow-up appointments is very important. At your follow-up appointment your Orthotist will make any necessary ‘fine-tuning’ adjustments to optimize your comfort and function. This is a normal part of the process.

Your foot health and comfort are very important to us. Please contact our office at (410)-321-6844 if you have any question or concerns about your foot orthoses.