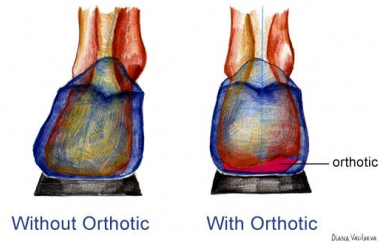


# ORTHOTICS

## What Are Orthotics?



Orthotics are custom made devices manufactured from many types of materials. They fit inside your own shoes, and are worn on a full time basis. Orthotics gently and constantly helps to control the way your foot functions. There are many types of orthotic devices. Advances in technology enable your podiatrist to prescribe a device specific to the activities that you participate in the most. From walking to running, or aerobics to basketball, orthotics can help you perform at peak efficiency. Professional orthotics are made from impressions of your feet. The devices are custom made for your feet only. Just as contact lenses or glasses improve vision, orthotics will help your podiatrist improve your foot function.

## How do Custom Foot Orthotics work?



Most foot pain is the result of a faulty relationship between the bones and muscles of the foot. Even the slightest misalignment can result in significant discomfort affecting the rest of your body. This abnormal function can result in problems such as bunions, hammer toes, arch and heel pain, corns, knee pain ... even back pain. As the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates once quoted “when our feet hurt, we hurt all over”.

The function of custom orthotics is much more than an arch support. Orthotics realigns the structures of the foot and leg to prevent bone mal-alignment as well as muscle, tendon, and ligament fatigue. They are often used after surgery to help stop the recurrence of foot deformities.

As your foot rests on the orthotic it is gently and consistently directed into the correct position for walking, running, and standing.

Because your foot is now functioning properly, the pain of muscle strain and pressure points is relieved, and the progression of deformities is stopped or slowed.

## Is There More Than One Type Of Orthotic?



Because we are born with different foot types, and because we engage in different occupations and activities, there are specific types of orthotics for individual patients. Orthotics may be used with children, adults, athletes, elderly patients and, very often, with patients following surgery or injury. Orthotics may be rigid, semi-rigid or soft (flexible). Some orthotics are meant to accommodate and take pressure off 'hot spots' in your feet. Specialty type orthotics can be fabricated for specific sports to help provide additional support and cushioning inherent with that particular activity. Running places 3-4 times the pressure of your body weight on your feet.

### **How Long Will I Need To Wear Orthotics and How Long Do They Last?**

Orthotics may require a gradual break-in period. They are worn in 95% of all walking or standing activities. You may need to wear orthotics indefinitely, depending on how your foot function responds. Orthotics have a variable life span, depending upon your activities. You may need periodic changes in your prescription as your foot function changes.

### **Will I Need More Than One Pair of Orthotics?**

There are patients who may need one pair for work and one pair for recreation. Women who wear different heel heights may require an additional pair. Your podiatrist may recommend more than one pair, depending on your individual need.