

Patient information

Information about your insole or foot orthoses

What are they?

Insoles or functional foot orthoses are inserts that are put inside your shoes to influence and improve the function of your foot. They are designed to reduce or absorb pressure or alter how hard and long the muscles in your legs and feet work.

There are two main types:

- **Functional foot orthoses**

These are used to reduce strain on an injury to help it heal and ease your pain.

- **Accommodative insole**

These are cushioned to ease pressure from a particular area on the foot. This could be from a deformity like arthritis, an area of high pressure (leading to corns or callus formation), or because sensation is reduced leading to possible trauma (neuropathy).

The insole will form one part of a prescribed care plan to help your condition improve, along with home exercises, footwear advice and possible life style changes. Insoles can have an effect on your whole body and consequently must be treated with respect when first using them.

What to expect when first wearing your insole

- Less room in your shoes. This can be helped by removing the original liner or changing footwear
- Possible aching in the feet, legs, upper thighs or lower back (this should not be significant pain)
- The feeling of a lump in the arch of your foot
- A feeling of walking on the outside of your foot

These feelings should subside quickly if you wear the insoles in gradually. By following the plan below, most potential problems can be avoided, resulting in you getting the best from your insole/orthoses as quickly as possible.

Do not wear your orthoses for sport or any rigorous physical activity like long shopping trips, until the wearing plan has been completed and you are totally comfortable with your devices.

Some people may be able to accelerate this plan, especially if they have worn an orthoses or insoles before, but we suggest still using the plan as a guide as insoles can differ.

Day/Week	Minimum Wearing Time	Maximum Wearing Time
Day 1	15 Minutes	1 Hour (or until uncomfortable)
Day 2	15 Minutes	1-2 Hours (or until uncomfortable)
Day 3	30 Minutes	2-4 Hours (or until uncomfortable)
Days 4-7	60 Minutes	2-4 Hours (or until uncomfortable)
Week 2	-	4-6 Hours (or until uncomfortable)
Week 3	-	6-8 Hours (or until uncomfortable)
Week 4	-	Up To All Day
Over 4 Weeks	-	Starting To Become Comfortable

When to ask for help

Stop wearing your device and contact your podiatry department if:

- You experience severe shooting pains anywhere in the body
- Your feet blister or the skin is rubbed sore
- The big toe joint hurts or seems to lock when you are walking
- Pain when using the insoles, even after undertaking the wearing in plan

Important

If you suffer from loss of feeling or sensation in your feet (neuropathy), you must only use your devices for 15 minutes to begin with. Inspect your feet after every wear for any signs of damage to the skin, redness, blistering or bruising.

Any sign of damage to the feet then stop using your insole immediately and contact the Podiatry department.

Choosing footwear

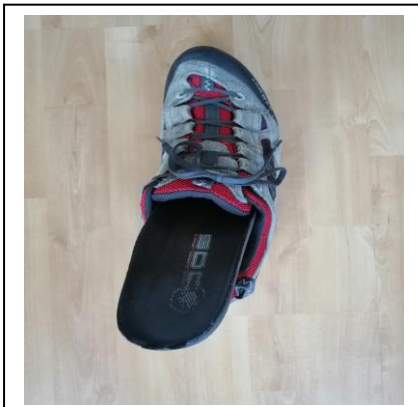
Footwear can influence how the insole works. The correct shoe needs to have:

- Fastening that holds the foot firmly such as a lace, buckle or Velcro fastening
- Heel height of no more than 3 cm
- Moulded rubber sole
- Broad heel for stability
- If you have diabetes then try and avoid a shoe that has seams that can rub the foot

A trainer or walking shoe often works best with your insole, but avoid using specialist corrective running shoes with your insoles as this may result in over correction and cause you further pain.

Fitting your orthoses/insole

1.



Step 1

Please remove the foot bed liner that comes with your shoe. This should just lift out, although it can occasionally be glued down. It should still be possible to remove the liner with some gentle persuasion.

2.



Step 2

Make sure your insole and foot bed liner are for the same shoe before adjusting (this example shows a left insole)

3.



Step 3

Place your insole on top of the foot bed liner making sure both sit level at the heel. Draw around any excess with a pen, then trim carefully with sharp scissors.

4.



Step 4

Place your insole into the shoe. Put your hand inside and feel if the insole is snug fitting with no rucking at the sides or toe area. Continue the processes above until you are happy with the fit. Now try the shoe on and have a walk in the house to test

Taking care of your insoles

Your device can be wiped clean with a damp cloth and left to slowly air dry overnight, away from radiators or heaters.

Your insoles should last a minimum of one year depending on your activity level; you may require your GP to re-refer you back to podiatry if your devices are excessively worn or causing you pain.

Please make sure you bring your insoles along to any future podiatry appointment so they can be reviewed or alternately you may be asked to provide pictures, these can be emailed to: **esht.podiatryinfo@nhs.net**

For more information

If you require any assistance then please contact Podiatry services:

Tel: 0300 131 4536 or Email: Esh-tr.podiatryenquiries@nhs.net

Sources of information

The Health and Care Professions Council (podiatrists register) - www.hcpc-uk.org

The College of Podiatry - www.cop.uk

Chartered society of Physiotherapy

British Orthopaedic foot and ankle society

NHS choices

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team - Tel: 0300 131 4500 Ext: 734731 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The Trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: 0300 131 4500 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:
James Lowton MSK Lead Podiatrist, Tanya Wade Senior Lab Technician Podiatry

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Responsible clinician/author: James Lowton MSK Lead Podiatrist