

## Guidelines for the use of functional foot orthoses (insoles)

### Why do I require an orthoses?

You have been referred for insoles/functional foot orthoses and you have been assessed by the orthotist. The orthotist will design the appropriate device to meet your specific needs and requirements. This leaflet has been provided to answer some of the questions you may have about the use of your insoles/functional foot orthoses.

### What are functional foot orthoses?

Functional foot orthoses/insoles are inserts that are put inside your shoes to influence and improve the function of your foot. Essentially they are used to offload/absorb pressure, correct foot position and correct the biomechanics of how your foot works. You will only see a benefit from the insoles if you wear them regularly.



### Wearing-in period

It may take some time to get used to the feeling and pressure of the insoles. It is very important that you wear your insoles in gradually. You should aim for an hour the first day, two hours the next day and so on until you build up the wearing time to a full day. If your insoles cause you any discomfort during the wearing-in period, stop wearing them for the remainder of that day and start again the next day. If the discomfort or pain persists after 7-10 days, please contact the department that issued them.

Please note: If you suffer from loss of sensation/ feeling in your feet or legs (neuropathy) you must only use your insoles for 15 minutes to begin with and inspect your feet carefully. If there are any sign of damage to the skin, redness, blistering or bruising you must stop using your insoles immediately and contact the department that issued them.

### Footwear selection

The correct footwear can influence the effectiveness of the device. A trainer/walking shoe works well with your device and the best shoes to provide support and comfort are lace-up (or Velcro, strap and buckle) footwear with:

- Heel height no higher than 3cm
- Moulded rubber sole unit
- Leather upper
- No seams for people with diabetes

Avoid shoes that offer little support. These include slip-ons, sandals, low heels or flat shoes.

### Taking care of your insoles

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

## Replacements

Your insoles/functional foot orthoses should last a minimum of one year. If you notice excessive wear on your insoles/functional foot orthoses or a change in your foot condition i.e. increased pain, please contact the department to arrange a review appointment with the orthotist.

## Eligibility

You are entitled to one pair of insoles which can be transferred from shoe to shoe. You will only have to pay if you would like any additional insoles unless your current insoles are irreparable. Please contact the department for a quote and advice.

## Contact us

Tel: 0300 131 4787 direct Line

Email: [esh-tr.orthoticsteam@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.orthoticsteam@nhs.net)

Orthotics Department

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

Level 3, Conquest Hospital

The Ridge

Hastings

TN37 7RD

Eastbourne District General Hospital Level 2

Kings Drive

Eastbourne

BN22 8PR

## Consent

Although you consent for this treatment, you may at any time after that withdraw such consent. Please discuss this with your medical team.

## Sources of information

### **British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (BAPO)**

Sir James Clark Building, Abbey Mill Business Centre, Paisley, Renfrewshire, PA1 1TJ

Tel: (01415) 617217 or 08451 668490

Website: [www.BAPO.org](http://www.BAPO.org)

## Important information

This patient information 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 4784 or by email at:

[esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net)

## Hand hygiene

We are 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 our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or [esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net](mailto: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.

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## Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Philip King, Orthotist

Lesley Baker, Service Manager

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:

Community Health and Integrated Care

Next review date: June 2025

Responsible clinician/author: Melanie Burgess, Orthotics Team Lead

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