

Orthotics

What are Orthotics? Orthotics are shoe inserts that are intended to correct an abnormal, or irregular, walking pattern. Orthotics are not truly “arch supports”, although some people use those words to describe them, and they perhaps can best be understood with those words in mind. They perform functions that make standing, walking, and running more comfortable and efficient, by altering slightly the angles at which the foot strikes a walking or running surface.

Podiatrists prescribe orthotics as a conservative approach to many foot problems or as a method of control after certain types of foot surgery; their use is a highly successful, practical treatment form.

Orthotics are constructed of various materials but the ones we make here at Family Footcare of Mid-Michigan, P.C. are made from a thermomoldable plastic. They minimize stress forces that could ultimately cause foot deformity and pain.

Three categories: those that primarily attempt to change foot function, those that are primarily protective in nature, and those that combine functional control and protection. We usually make functional devices unless a condition is beyond the point of reversal, then accommodative is the device of choice.

The Third type of orthotic device (semi rigid) provides for dynamic balance of the foot while walking or participating in sports. This orthotic is not a crutch, but an aid to the athlete. Functional dynamic orthotics help guide the foot through proper functions, allowing the muscles and tendons to perform more efficiently. The classic, semi rigid orthotic is constructed of layers of soft material, reinforced with more rigid materials.

Orthotics for Children: Orthotic devices are effective in the treatment of children with foot deformities. Most podiatric physicians recommend that children with such deformities be placed in orthotics soon after they start walking, to stabilize the foot. The devices can be placed directly into a standard shoe, or an athletic shoe.

Usually, the orthotics need to be replaced when the child’s foot has grown two sizes. Different types of orthotics may be needed as the child’s foot develops, and changes shape.

The length of time a child needs orthotics varies considerably, depending on the seriousness of the deformity and how soon correction is addressed.

Other Types: Various other orthotics may be used for multidirectional sports or edge-control sports by casting the foot within the ski boot, ice skate boot, or inline skate boot. Combinations of semi flexible material and soft material to accommodate painful areas are utilized for specific problems.

Research has shown that back problems frequently can be traced to a foot imbalance. It’s important for your podiatric physician to evaluate the lower extremity as a whole to provide for appropriate orthotic control for foot problems.

Thanks for choosing Family Footcare of Mid-Michigan, PC
989-775-8500
www.familyfootcare.biz

Connie Lee Bills, D.P.M.