



**Oxford Health**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Podiatry

# Offloading insoles

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## What to expect when first wearing your insoles?

- Less room in your shoes. This can be helped by removing the original liner or changing footwear.
  - You may experience some mild aching in the feet, ankles, knees, hips and lower back (this should not be significant pain). This is normal and if it should happen, remove the insoles from your shoes for at least two to four hours and then try again the next day.
- i** If pain persists, stop wearing them and make an appointment to see your podiatrist for an adjustment.

## When should you wear your insoles?

- i** Offloading insoles should be worn in your everyday shoes or slippers, outdoor and indoor to achieve the greatest long term benefits.
- ✓** You can move them to different footwear, but please note, there are only certain types of footwear that will be suitable to wear with the insoles.

# Choosing footwear

Footwear can influence how the insoles works. The appropriate shoe needs to have:

- ✔ Closed back and toe.
- ✔ Wide enough to accommodate your foot width.
- ✔ Fastening that holds the foot firmly such as a lace, buckle or Velcro.
- ✔ Heel height no more than 3cm.
- ✔ When choosing new footwear it is advisable that you take your new orthotics with you to the shop to ensure that they are a good fit.
- ✔ A trainer or walking shoe often works best with your insole.
- ❗ Most types of slip-on and court shoes are unsuitable as they will either end up too tight or slip off when walking.
- ❗ If you have reduced feeling or sensation in your feet, try and avoid a shoe that has seams that can rub the foot.

# How to fit your insoles?

- 1** 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** Make sure your insole and foot bed liner are for the same shoe before adjusting.
- 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.
- !** Trim excess in smaller amounts to avoid over trimming.
- 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.
- 5** 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.

If you are unsure, please contact your local podiatry clinic for advice.

## How to wear your insoles?

- ✓ Initially, wear insoles in the house for short periods (20-30 minutes) at a time and then check feet for any redness or signs of rubbing/pressure.
- ✓ Gradually increase the time spent wearing the orthotics until you feel comfortable wearing them all day. An example schedule of wearing in may look like this:
  - ✓ Day 1: 15-30 minutes
  - ✓ Day 2: 30-60 minutes
  - ✓ Day 3: 1-2 hours
- ✓ Inspect your feet after every wear for any signs of damage to the skin, redness, blistering or bruising.
- ! Do not use your insoles during peak activities such as work or shopping for example until you are comfortable wearing your insoles for several hours without discomfort.

## What if there is a problem?

Stop wearing your insoles and contact your podiatry clinic if:

- ! Your feet blister or the skin is rubbed sore.
- ! Persisting pain when using the insoles, even wearing in gradually.

# Taking care of your insoles

- i** Your device can be wiped clean with a damp cloth and left to slowly dry overnight, away from radiators or heaters. We recommend cleaning them at least once per fortnight to reduce bacterial growth.
- i** Your insoles should last at least one year depending on your foot deformity and activity level. If they become worn before this time, then you should contact your local podiatry clinic for review.

## Can I have additional pairs?

NHS podiatry patients are entitled to one pair of devices free of charge at a time. The insoles are replaced based on clinical need; however bespoke devices can be refurbished (renewal of top cover etc.) without having to replace the whole device. You can purchase additional pairs through the department. Please ask.

## Individual advice

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# Accessibility

Patient information leaflets are available on our website:  
[www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets)

# Get in touch

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# Feedback

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides advice and support to patients, families, and carers, helping to resolve any problems, concerns, or complaints you may have.

Phone             0800 328 7971  
Email             PALS@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

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