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Footwear and OTC Orthotics Recommendations

Why Use Orthotics?

Orthotic inserts help support your feet, improve alignment, reduce excessive motion, and decrease stress on your feet, ankles, knees, hips, and lower back. They work best when worn consistently in supportive shoes.

Recommended Orthotics

The following over-the-counter orthotics are good options:

PowerStep®

- Pinnacle (Plantar fasciitis and heel pain relief)
- Maxx or Pulse (overpronation and stability)
- Morton's Extension (Hallux limitus/rigidus)
- Plus (Ball of the foot pain, metatarsalgia, neuroma)
- SlenderFit (dress shoes)

Superfeet®

- Green (maximum support)
- Blue (moderate support)
- Run Cushion (for athletic shoes)
- Dress Orthotics (for dress shoes with limited space)

SOLE®

- Active Medium
- Active Thick
- Thin or Slim models for tighter-fitting shoes
- Heat-moldable options are available for a customized fit.

Recommended Shoes

Orthotics work best in supportive shoes with a removable factory insole.
Examples include:

- Brooks
- Orthofeet
- HOKA
- ASICS
- New Balance
- Saucony

Avoid wearing orthotics in worn-out shoes, flip-flops, slippers, or shoes without adequate support unless specifically instructed.

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Break-In Schedule

It is normal to notice mild soreness or muscle fatigue while your feet adjust.
Day 1: 1–2 hours
Day 2: 2–3 hours
Day 3: 3–4 hours
Increase wear by approximately 1–2 hours each day as tolerated until you are able to wear them all day (usually within 1–2 weeks).
If discomfort develops:

- Remove the inserts.
- Rest until symptoms improve.
- Resume wearing them for a shorter period the next day.
- Do not try to "push through" significant pain.

How to Use Your Orthotics

- Remove the original removable insole from your shoe before inserting the orthotic whenever possible.
- Make sure the orthotic sits flat in the shoe.
- Wear supportive shoes whenever you are walking or standing for extended periods.
- Transfer the orthotics between shoes if needed.

Expectations

Orthotics improve support and foot mechanics but do not provide immediate pain relief for every condition. Most patients notice gradual improvement over several weeks with consistent use.

When to Contact Our Office

Please contact our office if:

- Pain significantly worsens after wearing the orthotics.
- The inserts do not fit into your shoes.
- You develop numbness, skin irritation, blisters, or pressure sores.
- Symptoms have not improved after several weeks of consistent use.

Follow-Up

Continue wearing the orthotics daily and follow up as scheduled so your progress can be evaluated. If over-the-counter orthotics do not provide adequate relief, custom functional orthotics may be recommended.

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Recommended Shoe List

Proper footwear is an important part of treating foot and ankle pain. Shoes should provide good arch support, cushioning, and stability. Replace athletic shoes approximately 300–500 miles or when they show signs of wear.

Running & Walking Shoes:

These shoes are excellent choices for daily walking, exercise, prolonged standing, and many common foot conditions such as plantar fasciitis, arthritis, flat feet, tendonitis, and diabetic foot care.

Asics

- ASICS Gel-Kayano (over pronation, pes planus, good for stability)
- ASICS Gel-Nimbus (neutral foot types, high impact cushion, arthritis, fat pad atrophy)

Brooks

- Brooks Adrenaline GTS (overpronation, pes planus, plantar fasciitis, good for mild to moderate stability)
- Brooks Ghost (neutral to mildly pronated feet, metatarsalgia)

New Balance

- New Balance 860 (over pronation, pes planus, good for stability and motion control)
- New Balance 990 (arthritis, wide feet, good for durable support for daily walking and standing)

HOKA

- HOKA Bondi (arthritis, heel pain, plantar fasciitis, metatarsalgia, good for prolonged standing/walking)
- HOKA Arahi (pes planus, mild to moderate overpronation, plantar fasciitis, good for stability and cushion)

Orthofeet

- Orthofeet Coral (Neuropathy, wide feet, bunion and hammertoes, good for extra depth and cushioning)
- Orthofeet Sprint (plantar fasciitis, pes planus, good for extra support and roomy toe box)

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Hiking Shoes & Boots:

For hiking and uneven terrain, consider supportive hiking shoes or boots from:

- Keen
- Merrell
- Salomon

Choose a model with good traction, ankle support (when appropriate), and adequate toe box width for comfort on longer hikes.

Dress Shoes

If dress shoes are required, choose supportive options such as:

- Vionic Dress Shoes
- Orthofeet Dress Shoes

Avoid flat dress shoes, high heels, or shoes with little to no arch support whenever possible.

Sandals & Indoor Footwear

Avoid walking barefoot, even at home.
Recommended supportive sandals and house shoes include:

- Vionic Sandals
- HOKA Ora Recovery Sandals
- OOFOS Recovery Sandals
- Birkenstock Sandals
- Orthofeet Slippers

These options provide significantly better support than traditional flip-flops or slippers and can help reduce stress on the feet.

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General Shoe Tips

Choose shoes with a firm heel counter and supportive midsole.
Select shoes with a wide toe box if you have bunions, hammertoes, or swelling.
Replace worn shoes regularly.
Bring your orthotics or inserts when trying on new shoes.
If you wear orthotics, choose shoes with removable insoles whenever possible.