

"Are orthotics covered?"

Prescription orthotics are a proven medical treatment for many conditions affecting the foot and lower leg. Orthotics are cost-effective inserts prescribed to correct abnormal biomechanical forces that cause pain and deformities. They last five years or longer depending on usage, and can be refurbished by our orthotic lab when they begin to show wear.

Often, the use of orthotics can eliminate the need for long-term drug therapy, physical therapy, or surgical corrections. Thus, they are covered by many insurance plans as therapeutic and preventive medical devices.

If you are concerned about coverage, we provide you with a detailed list of questions to ask your insurance company. A letter of medical necessity

and any other necessary paperwork accompanies each claim submitted for orthotics.

The majority of insurance plans allow 1-2 pairs of orthotics per calendar year. But there are a few plans that do not cover them at all. As with all medical services, coverage is based on individual plans. So if you are concerned about benefit levels, it is always wise to check before you order. You can find the list of questions on our website (www.chicagopodiatry.com) under patient forms, orthotic information.



Connect with us online at chicagopodiatry.com

We hope that you find this issue of *inSTEP* interesting and informative, but it is only a taste of what we have to offer online at www.chicagopodiatry.com.

Not only will you find this and all of our patient newsletters archived, but there is also information on specific foot and ankle problems, things to look out for, before and after photos, and helpful links to other organizations.

The site also has valuable background information on our doctors and therapists, directions to the office and a tour of our facilities.

Please note that patients now have the ability to request appointments

online and fill out new patient information forms on our secure server. It's fast, convenient and secure.



How to "read" your footprints

When you take a step, your foot typically hits the ground heel first and rolls toward your toes, flattening the arch slightly. As you push off the ball of your foot, your arch springs back and does not touch the ground. That's how normal feet are supposed to work. Unfortunately, many feet aren't normal.

If your foot rolls too much toward the inside, it's called over-pronation. This leads to arch strain and pain on the inside of the knee. If your foot rolls too much to the outside, that's under-pronation, and you're more susceptible to ankle sprains and stress fractures. You can remedy foot pain by compensating for these tendencies, but first you need to determine which way your feet roll. Try this simple test:

Put your feet into a bucket of water, then make footprints on a piece of brown paper. What do your footprints tell you?

If your footprint looks like an oblong pancake with toes, you pronate excessively or have flat feet. Try molded-leather arch supports off the pharmacy shelf. And when shopping for athletic shoes, ask for styles with "control" features — soles designed to halt that rolling-in motion. If arch supports or sports shoes don't help, see a foot specialist about custom-molded orthotic shoe inserts.

If there's little or no connection in your footprint between the front part of the foot and the heel, you under-pronate or have a high arch. This means a lot of your weight is landing on the outside edge of your foot. Ask for "stability" athletic shoes, which are built with extra cushioning to remedy this problem. And if you are prone to ankle sprains, wear high-top athletic shoes that cover the foot and ankle snugly to minimize damage from twists.

inSTEP
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OUR QUARTERLY GUIDE TO THE WELL-INFORMED PATIENT FALL 2007

Growing Pains?

Areas of concern in pediatric podiatry

Childhood foot and ankle disorders are a common area of concern for parents. The problems range widely and while most are not serious some do require intervention. From time to time we will use this space to answer some common questions about pediatric podiatry.

Is heel pain a normal sign of growing pains?

Occasional heel pain is common in children, but that doesn't mean it is normal. In children, the heel bone (calcaneus) is not fully developed until around ages 14 to 16. Until the heel bone is completely fused, new bone forms at the growth plate (physis), an area located at the back of the heel.

Calcaneal Apophysitis, also known as Sever's Disease, is the most common cause of heel pain in children ages 10 to 14. It is an inflammation (not really a disease) of the growth plate in the heel due to muscle strain and repetitive stress, especially in children who are very active or overweight. This condition causes pain and tenderness in the back and side of the heel, and may be painful when touched. Pain usually decreases when activity is reduced. The

condition may recur off and on for several years until the growth plate closes.

This type of "growing" pain should be professionally treated. Some simple but effective treatments can reduce pain and keep your child active.

Can the right shoes affect these problems?

Many adult foot problems can have their origins in childhood, so attention to footwear in children can minimize the risk of these problems in adults. Poorly fitting children's shoes can lead to a number of problems in adulthood. Given the high level of pain and discomfort that these problems can cause, it is obviously logical to attempt to prevent these problems by ensuring that the child's shoe is fitted appropriately. Foot problems in children are often preventable by properly fitting footwear.

Fit to be Tied.
Find out the secret to a healthy fitting shoe
Page 4

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