



*Dress Ups* orthotics provide moderate biomechanical control in patients who wear closed heel fashion shoes.



*All Star* orthotics are for the more casual athlete engaging in multiple sport activities.

*Here's what satisfied patients are saying about orthotics:*

*"I had bunion surgery. The thought that my bunions could return was frightening. Thank goodness, orthotics may prevent that." – P.B.*

*"I had the worst heel pain you could possibly imagine. I couldn't walk when I got up in the morning. Thanks to my new orthotics, I've noticed a tremendous improvement." – L.D.*

*"I thought my jogging days were over. Every stride I took I thought was going to be my last step. But with orthotics, I'm able to resume my normal running schedule pain free." – M.L.*

*"I was pleasantly surprised to learn that a special type of orthosis can be made that will fit into my pumps. Now I can be comfortable and feel good too." – R.S.*



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An Investment in  
Comfort*

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**Dr. Lawrence Mandel**

## *What are Orthotics?*

An orthotic device (orthosis) is an individually designed custom brace that changes the function of your foot.

### *How do they work?*

An orthosis changes the way your foot works. Your doctor will determine why your foot function is causing your particular symptoms. Then, by using an orthosis that changes the way your foot works, the symptoms may be relieved. Flat feet, high arches, hammertoes, neuromas, calluses, bunions, and heel pain are common foot problems that may be helped by changing your foot function. Ankle weaknesses or frequent sprains are often treated with orthotic devices. Sometimes knee and back pain may be related to abnormal foot function and are relieved by orthotic control. One of the most common uses for a foot orthoses is for post-operative control. Many foot problems requiring surgical correction are caused by abnormal function. Frequently following surgical correction of the deformity, an orthotic device is used to reduce the possibility of its recurrence.

### *How much of the time do I need to wear my orthotic devices?*

You should discuss your particular needs with your doctor. Orthotic control is somewhat analogous to the use of eyeglasses. While you are wearing them, the function is improved. Ideally, you should wear the orthoses whenever you are on your feet. If your symptoms are because of the strain of a particular activity, you may need to wear the orthoses only while engaged in that activity.

In most situations, it is advisable to wear your orthoses about 75 percent of the time you are on your feet. It may be acceptable for you to wear some shoes occasionally without your orthoses. Because many foot symptoms result from abnormal foot function, the more you wear them the greater the benefit.

### *Types of Orthotic Devices*

There are many types of orthotic devices. Your doctor will decide which one will be the best for treating your particular problem. You should discuss with your doctor the types of shoes you will be using with them. The material that is used will depend on the different activities during which you will be wearing them. Some activities put unusual stress on your feet and will require specific materials or additions to the orthotic device. For example, activities requiring rapid direction changes may cause blistering on the sole without a special topcover. The type of device you will need for best function may not fit in all shoes. It might be useful to have a second pair of devices made which will function in your dress or sport shoes.

### *Types of Shoes*

Some types of orthotic devices will work in nearly any shoe. It is important that both the orthoses and your shoes are appropriate for your activities. Most types of orthotic devices will work in several different types of shoes. In some situations, more than one pair of orthoses may be needed. A woman's foot obviously needs to be in a different position in a high-heeled dress shoe than in her running shoes. It is important that you and your doctor discuss the type of shoes you will be wearing with your orthoses.

## *How long will orthoses be needed?*

Most often, an orthotic device will change the way your foot works only while you are wearing it. So the orthosis is accommodating the abnormal function, not correcting it. Theoretically, an orthosis could change the structure and functions permanently, but this is not often seen in clinical practice. Because of this, orthoses will be required as long as you are involved in an activity that is causing your symptoms. Orthotic control of a child's foot is an exception where the primary use may be to prevent development of a deformity during growth. In this situation, it is best to use the orthoses until growth is complete and then as needed if symptoms are present. Controlling abnormal function of a growing foot allows more normal structure to develop, limiting future symptoms.

### *How long does it take to get the orthoses back from the Laboratory?*

It depends on the materials that the devices are made of and the transportation time. Some devices may be back in the office within 10 days, and others may take as long as four weeks. Your doctor may want you to wear a temporary device or keep your feet taped while you are waiting for them to be returned.

### *How long does it take to get used to orthotics?*

Usually you will adjust to orthoses in a few weeks. In some situations, it might take a little longer. If you intend to use your orthoses in sports activities, it will probably be necessary for you to adjust to them for everyday wear first. Your doctor will recommend a break-in schedule for your particular needs.

## *Evaluation*

The extent to which your doctor feels an evaluation is necessary in order to prescribe an orthotic device will differ. Often an evaluation will include range of motion testing, posture and gait (walking) evaluation. X-rays are often indicated to determine the condition and position of joints and to rule out abnormalities not appropriately treated with orthoses. Sometimes use of tape or padding will allow your doctor to determine the degree of control that will be needed.

### *Impressions*

In order for the laboratory to construct your orthotic device, it is necessary to make an impression of your foot in the position it should function. The impression is usually made of plaster. Your foot is positioned and held while the impression "sets up." This impression is the most critical step in the fabrication of the orthotic device.

### *Lab Process*

Your impressions will be sent to the laboratory. The lab makes a positive model of your foot and adds any corrections prescribed by your doctor. The materials specified will then be formed to the positive model of your foot. Additional corrections are often added to the orthotic device at this point to be sure that it balances your foot to the supporting surface. Covers, extensions, and other additions are then made before the orthotic is mailed back. Although specific quality control checks are made at each step along the way, your doctor may still make some adjustments to insure the best fit to both your foot and shoe.