



## ORTHOTICS CARE LEAFLET

Your orthotics exactly match the contours of each foot and also contain additions to correct the angular relationship between your fore foot , rear foot and leg.

Unlike arch supports, your orthotics move with your feet and control certain parts of your feet during your gait or walking cycle. They therefore have a profound effect upon your whole musculoskeletal system and so it is important you read this leaflet carefully.

### **Wearing – in**

Initially, and particularly over the first few weeks, your orthotics might seem uncomfortable, and you might also experience minor aches in your knees, hips and back. This is because your feet, legs, bones and muscles are working differently to the way they were before.

You might also experience an unfamiliar sensation in the soles of your feet since the orthotics are supporting parts of your feet which might be unused to direct contact, particularly with a material which refuses to compromise or sag.

- 1) When you first start to wear your orthotics, it is important that you break them in slowly to allow your body to adapt. On the first day, wear your orthotics for between 30 and 60 minutes and then increase by an hour each day thereafter.
- 2) If pain or blisters develop at any time during the break-in period, remove your orthotics and, on the following day, reduce the amount of time you wear them, but only if they are comfortable. (If pain persists or any new complaints arise, remove your orthotics and contact Kent Foot & Ankle Clinic.
- 3) Within 3 to 4 weeks, you should be comfortable wearing your orthotics for most of the day.

### **Shoes**

If possible, purchase a new pair of shoes, where little distortion has already occurred, and with as deep a heel counter as possible (such as those with removable insoles). You should also look for shoes offering good support so that your foot is securely anchored. The orthotics are only as good as the footwear you put them in and they will take up room in the shoes. Your shoes therefore need to be roomy around the toes, low heeled and have a fastening. The orthotics provided can be used in a variety of footwear and are designed to be swapped from shoe to shoe. 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. If you are buying trainers, a neutral running shoe is advised.

### **Sports and Activities**

Only when you are completely comfortable using the orthotics for low impact activity should you begin to gradually use them for higher impact activities, such as hill walking, running and sports. The step-up in activity should be a slow and gradual process allowing the body time to adapt to the changes in foot function during the activity.

### **How Long Will They Last?**

Bespoke devices are designed to last for a minimum of 5 years (depending on the prescription). The products' life will be maximised if they are cared for properly. The best way to clean the devices is to gently sponge them with warm soapy water and then dry with a paper towel. Do not soak your orthotic for long periods of time or dry artificially.

### **What Should I Do If My Symptoms Continue?**

It may take some time for patients to derive the full benefit from a foot orthotic. If after an initial period of six weeks symptoms continue, it may be necessary to review the level of control and change the posting angles. If your symptoms deteriorate you should stop wearing your orthotics and make an appointment with your Podiatrist.