

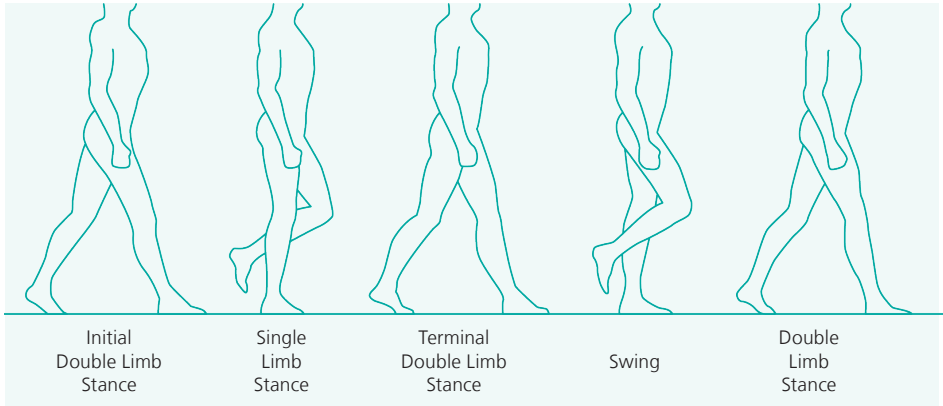
Information for patients
Foot Orthoses



**Musculoskeletal Service
Shropshire & Telford (MSST)**

(formerly Shropshire Orthopaedic Outreach Service 'SOOS'
/Telford Musculoskeletal Service TeMS)

Gait cycle



When Your Feet Hurt

Feet can hurt for a number of reasons but the most common reason is from the misalignment of the joints in the foot and leg.

The end result is pain and problems with:

- Corns and callous
- Painful joints in the foot
- Knee pain, hip pain, back pain
- Deformity of the foot e.g. hammer toes

During each step you take, your foot has to adapt to the ground by increasing its mobility. We take on average between 5,000 and 10,000 steps each day, loading 1½ times our body weight through each foot at every step.

Excessive mobility can place additional stress on the foot and certain orthotics can help to reduce this mobility and stress. Efficient walking also requires the foot to transition from mobile to more rigid. This aids propulsion.

Too much rigidity though can compromise shock absorption and orthotics with different materials and contours help improve this.

How does the foot work?

The normal gait cycle is divided into 3 phases, **1.Contact phase** **2. Midstance phase** **3. Propulsion or our 'toe off phase'**. The foot has to move from an adaptive, mobile shock absorber at contact phase to distribute and disseminate 'shock' through our foot, ankle, leg and pelvis' to then adapt to a firm, solid base or lever to propel our body forward. If the foot is unable to reach the correct position at the correct time, symptoms occur, which is where orthoses can help to re-position and adjust timings.

We may also need to look at the way you walk to maximise the effect of the orthotic. This may involve rehabilitation exercises to ensure that we give the foot the best chance of recovery.

What are orthoses?

Orthoses are specific made to measure insoles to fit into shoes and alter the position of the foot and correct the timing of joint movements. This allows the foot and leg to be more efficient.

Too much rigidity though can compromise shock absorption and orthotics with different materials and contours help improve this.

When to wear your orthoses

You should aim to wear your orthoses for about an hour on the first day. Then for an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon. Gradually increase the wearing time until you can wear them comfortably all day.

If you feel any pain or straining of your feet, legs or back reduce the wearing time for awhile and then gradually begin to increase it again after the pain has gone.

As your foot improves you will notice that you will walk better and your pains should begin to resolve.

What footwear is required?

You should try to wear them in shoes which have a high enough back to stop your foot slipping out. If the orthosis squeak then some talcum powder will help.

Trainers are good to accommodate orthoses.

What about running?

If you intend to run on your orthoses then you may need to have a different type. Normal everyday orthoses are much firmer to hold the foot but in running it is best to have an orthoses that allows more foot movement and shock absorption. Discuss this with your clinician.



How long do they last?

Most orthoses with moderate wear should last about 18 to 24 months before the heel post needs to be replaced or any soft covers need refurbishing.

How much do they cost?

Foot orthoses can cost the NHS anything in the region of £25 to £150. Usually if a cast has been taken of the foot, the cost is at the mid to upper limit. It is for this reason that we ask you to take very good care of the devices and report any fitting problems to your clinician if you are unable to wear them.

The NHS will only replace if your prescription needs have changed or if a child – have grown out of them. If a second pair is required, e.g. for convenience, these can be purchased. Please ask you clinician what the cost will be as usually we add a £25 administration charge in addition to the cost of the devices.

Prescribing Podiatrist:

Contact

Call: **0808 1754001**

Email: shropcom.msstpatients@nhs.net

Notes:

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print. Arrangements can also be made on request for it to be explained in your preferred language. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: rjah.pals.office@nhs.net

Feedback

Tell us what you think of our patient information leaflet. Please send your comments to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: rjah.pals.office@nhs.net

Date of publication: June 2026
Date of review: June 2029
Author: Louise Smith-Williams
© RJAH Trust 2026

The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt
Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 7AG

Tel: 01691 404000
Web: www.rjah.nhs.uk