



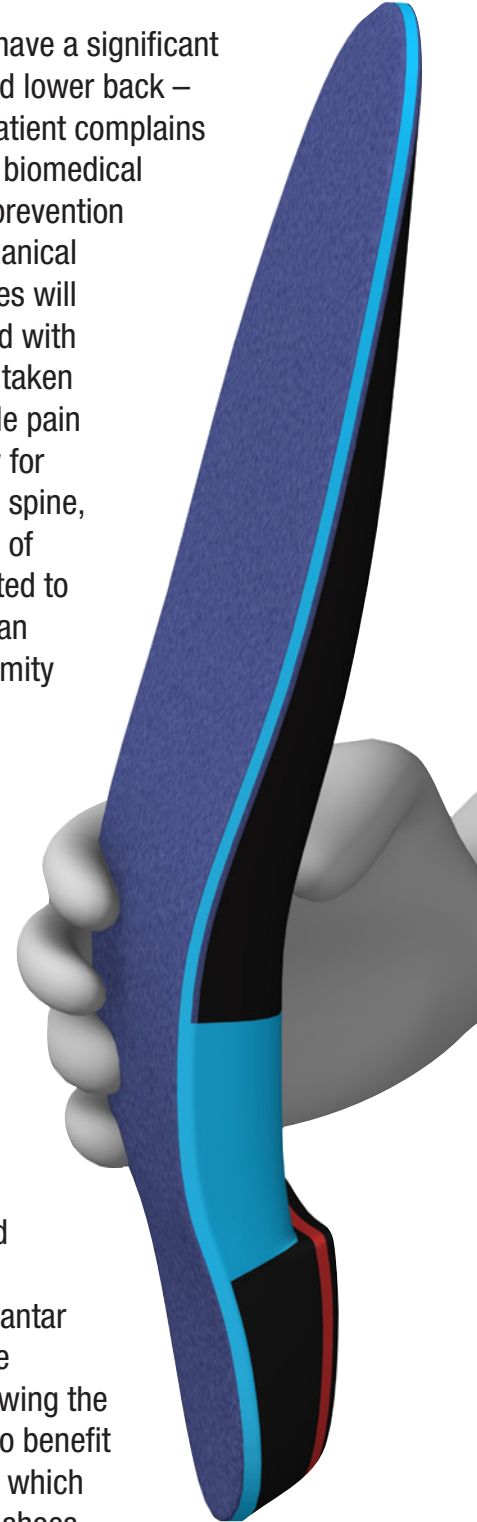
Foot & Practice

A foot health message from Proactive Podiatry

Preventative benefits of orthotics

Biochemical problems can have a significant impact on the legs, pelvis and lower back – and obviously the feet. If a patient complains of pain in these areas, customised biomedical orthotics can lead to relief and/or prevention of symptoms. Following a biomechanical assessment by a podiatrist, orthoses will be made to fit the patient's foot and with the patient's biomechanical needs taken into consideration. Orthotics provide pain relief and ongoing support to allow for realignment of the knees, hips and spine, thereby providing relief for a range of musculoskeletal problems not limited to the feet. In most cases, orthotics can prevent disability and further deformity of the foot caused by incorrect biomechanics.

Patients with arthritis, diabetes or circulatory conditions are at increased risk for a range of injuries for which orthoses can provide relief and support, and they thereby act as an effective preventative treatment. Obese patients and pregnant women are at increased risk for fallen arches and over-pronation, for which orthotics can provide much needed support. In the general population, patients with Achilles tendonitis, plantar fasciitis or metatarsalgia will notice significant relief of symptoms following the fitting of orthotics. Athletes can also benefit hugely from the fitting of orthotics, which can be custom made to fit athletic shoes, as they can for a range of other shoe types, including high heels and dress shoes.



Most orthotics are made from plastic polymer, EVA or carbon fiber to provide patients with firm support. For patients with sensitive foot problems — including the elderly or people with serious injuries such as ulcers — softer, more flexible orthotics will be made to provide support without causing further pain to already sensitive areas. For serious conditions, orthotics that support the ankle as well as the base of the foot can be customised following biomechanical assessment.



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