

About your new footwear

Surgical Appliance Department
Tel: 01271 322492

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

Your footwear

The Appliance/Orthotic Department has given you some footwear specifically chosen to meet your foot deformity/medical needs. It is therefore important that you wear it as much as possible. It will be different from shop-bought footwear, particularly in width and depth.

How to use your new footwear

Any new footwear needs a period of “wearing in”. This means that you should start using it for 30 – 40 minutes at a time. You will find that the soles will feel quite stiff to begin with, but they will soften with use.

What should I look for when first wearing my new footwear?

Check your feet daily, looking for:

- Redness or change of colour on your foot, as this could indicate a pressure area.
- Swelling that is not usually present.
- Any break in the skin, especially over the tops of the toes, bunion area or to the soles of your feet.
- Any additional build-up of hard skin to the tops of the toes, bunion area or the soles of the feet.

If you have any problems, contact the Surgical Appliance/Orthotic Department on 01271 322492 and an appointment will be arranged for you to see the orthotist.

After the first wearing of the footwear

If after the first wearing of the footwear, you do not notice any of the things listed above, then gradually extend the time you wear it. Eventually, use them as much as possible. Even if you don't have any problems, it is important that you still check your feet, particularly if you are prone to ulceration or have reduced sensation.

What if I have reduced sensation in my feet?

If you have reduced sensation in your feet then it is most important that you check the insides of your shoes for any foreign bodies, such as coins or stones. Because you cannot feel, you could walk all day with something in your shoe and not be aware of it. This could cause a lot of damage to your feet. Also check the soles to make sure nothing has gone through them, as again this could damage your feet.

If you have reduced sensation to your feet, you will not feel pressure or be aware of skin breakage, so it is even more important that you do a visual check of your feet every day.

How do I look after my footwear?

Never dry footwear near fires, radiators or hot pipes as this will harden the leather and make it crack.

The best way to dry wet footwear is to allow it to dry naturally at room temperature.

Clean your footwear regularly with a brush or damp cloth before applying a good quality shoe polish or cream. On suede, remove the dirt with a suede brush; suede needs a little extra care to keep its colour and appearance.

Repairs

It is important that your footwear is kept in good repair. If this is not done, then the uppers will lose their shape or distort and the footwear will not last as it should.

The Surgical Appliance/Orthotic Department may be able to do the repairs - check with them as to the local policy. If they do not repair footwear, then you will need to take your shoes to a good local shoe repairer.

Remember – it is your responsibility to keep your footwear in good repair.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns about your footwear, please contact the Surgical Appliance Officer at North Devon District Hospital on **01271 322492**.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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