

Preparing for Your Podiatry Appointment

How to Get the Most from Your Assessment

A podiatry assessment covers much more than just your feet. We look at your posture, how you walk, your joints, muscles, and the footwear you use. The more information you can bring, the more accurate and useful your assessment will be. This guide tells you what to bring, what to expect, and how to prepare.

1 What to Bring

Item	Why We Ask for It
Your everyday footwear	The shoes you wear most often tell us a great deal. We look at the wear pattern on the sole, the heel counter condition, the width and support, and whether the shoes are appropriate for your feet and activities.
Your sports or exercise footwear (if relevant)	If your symptoms occur during or after exercise, we need to assess the footwear you use for that activity. This includes running shoes, football boots, or any sport-specific footwear.
Any existing orthotics or insoles	If you currently wear orthotics, custom or prefabricated, bring them. We will assess whether they are still working, appropriately worn, or need replacing.
A list of any medications	Certain medications affect healing, sensation, circulation, and skin condition. Anti-inflammatories, blood thinners, steroids, and medications for diabetes or arthritis are all relevant.
Any relevant medical history or reports	Previous imaging reports (X-ray, MRI, ultrasound), letters from other specialists, or a relevant diagnosis are helpful context. You do not need to bring originals — a photo on your phone is fine.
A list of your main concerns	Writing down your main symptoms, when they started, what makes them better or worse, and what you want to achieve from treatment helps you make the most of your appointment time.

2 What to Wear

Your assessment will involve observing your feet and lower limbs, and watching you walk. To make this as easy as possible:

- Wear or bring shorts, loose-fitting trousers, or clothing that can be rolled up to the knee

- Socks are fine — you will be asked to remove footwear and socks at the start of the assessment
- If you have been referred for a specific lower limb problem, clothing that allows access to the hip and knee is also helpful
- Avoid tights or compression stockings if possible (unless they are part of your treatment)

3 What to Expect During Your Appointment

Stage	What Happens
History	Your clinician will ask about your symptoms, medical history, activity levels, and goals. This is the most important part of the assessment — everything we find needs to make sense in the context of your story.
Observation	We look at your feet and lower limbs with you sitting, standing, and sometimes lying down. We are assessing posture, foot shape, skin condition, and alignment.
Joint and muscle assessment	We check how well your joints move — particularly the ankle, big toe, and subtalar joint — and test the strength and function of key muscles.
Gait assessment	We watch you walk, both barefoot and in footwear. We may use video recording to review your walking pattern in more detail.
Footwear review	We assess your shoes for fit, support, wear patterns, and suitability for your feet and any orthotics.
Discussion and plan	At the end, your clinician will explain what was found, what it means, and what the treatment plan involves. There is always time for questions.

4 Common Questions

Question	Answer
Will it hurt?	A thorough assessment does involve some pressure testing of tender areas. Your clinician will work at a pace you are comfortable with. Please say at any point if something is uncomfortable — clear communication helps us assess accurately.
Do I need to have walked or exercised beforehand?	Not necessarily, but if your symptoms are exercise-related, we may ask you to do some light walking or a specific movement before the assessment so we can observe your symptoms in the relevant context.
How long will the appointment take?	A new patient assessment is typically 45–60 minutes. Review appointments are usually shorter (20–30 minutes).
Can I bring someone with me?	Yes. A family member or carer is always welcome. Having someone with you can be helpful for remembering information and asking questions.
Will I get orthotics at the first appointment?	Not always. The assessment may identify that a different approach is more appropriate, or that further information is needed first. Your clinician will explain their reasoning at the end of your appointment.

The most important preparation

The more openly you can describe your symptoms and daily life, the more we can tailor your assessment and treatment. There are no wrong answers and no detail is too small. You are the expert on your own experience.