

## What to Expect Over the First 8 Weeks and Beyond

Getting the best results from your bespoke orthoses takes time and, sometimes, a few adjustments. This guide walks you through what is normal at each stage — from the first days of wear through to your longer-term follow-up. Knowing what to expect will help you stay on track and make the most of your appointments.

### Your Orthotics Journey: A Timeline

| Phase                     | Focus                                   | What to expect                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Weeks 0–2 Getting started | Break-in and footwear adjustment        | Follow the gradual wear schedule provided — start with a few hours per day and build up. Feet and legs may feel different as they adapt to the new support. Mild muscle aching is normal. Note any areas of pressure or discomfort. Get in touch if: sharp pain, burning, pins and needles, significant blistering, or a marked worsening of symptoms. |
| Weeks 2–4 Early progress  | Comfort, fit, and early symptom changes | At this stage it is worth reviewing how the orthoses are settling in. Small adjustments to covers, padding, or shoe set-up are common and expected. Note any changes in your symptoms — positive or negative — and raise them at your next contact with the clinic. Activity and exercise levels may be progressed.                                    |
| Weeks 6–8 Review period   | Longer-term comfort and function        | By this point there should be enough information to assess how pain and function have responded over time. If the devices need design changes — more or less support, different stiffness, or a revised posting — a refined version can be produced. The goal is to find the right balance for long-term management.                                   |
| Months 3–4 Ongoing use    | Consolidation                           | Most people are wearing their orthoses comfortably full time by this stage. Symptoms should be tracking in a positive direction. If you have concerns about comfort, fit, or progress at any point, get in touch with the clinic rather than waiting.                                                                                                  |

| Phase                            | Focus                 | What to expect                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Month 6<br>Longer-term follow-up | Outcome questionnaire | At around six months you will receive a short questionnaire asking how your pain, function, and activity levels have changed since you started. Your answers help the clinic understand how you have responded and whether anything further — an adjustment, a refresh, or a follow-up — would be useful. |

## Refining Is a Normal Part of the Process

Not everyone needs adjustments, but changes are common — particularly in the first eight weeks. This does not mean something has gone wrong. Orthotic prescription is a clinical process that adapts around your response, your footwear, and how your body loads the device during real activity.

Each refinement brings the device closer to the right balance of comfort and support for you, long term.

## What to Keep Track Of

| What to monitor                                    | Why it matters                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pain levels — morning, during activity, end of day | This is the primary outcome. Note whether pain is improving, staying the same, or worsening, and at which point in the day.                      |
| Comfort and pressure                               | Note any specific areas of rubbing, pressure, or discomfort — particularly under the heel, arch, or ball of the foot.                            |
| Footwear fit                                       | If the orthosis does not sit securely in a particular shoe, this affects how it functions. Let the clinic know — it may be adjustable.           |
| Activity levels                                    | Note which activities cause problems and which feel better. This information directly guides any refinements.                                    |
| General function                                   | Are you walking further, managing stairs more easily, returning to sport or work? These functional changes are just as important as pain scores. |

## Your Role in Getting the Best Outcome

| Action                                      | Why it helps                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wear orthoses as directed                   | Consistent wear gives the devices a real opportunity to make a difference — intermittent use makes it hard to assess progress   |
| Follow your exercise and activity plan      | Orthoses work alongside exercise and load management — they are most effective when rehab is progressed alongside them          |
| Attend your appointments                    | Appointments are the opportunity to review progress, refine the prescription, and move the plan forward — make the most of them |
| Communicate openly                          | Share what is and is not working. Early, specific feedback leads to faster, better outcomes                                     |
| Get in touch between appointments if needed | Early adjustments often prevent larger problems later. You do not need to wait if something is not right                        |