

SPECIAL REPORT



Everything You Should Know About **ORTHOTICS**



by **Dr. Sherry Lu**

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Introductory Letter

from Dr. Sherry Lu

Dear Friend,

If you are currently suffering from foot or ankle pain, you know first-hand how even the slightest discomfort can impact your active lifestyle. At Charlotte Foot Care Associates, we believe that no one should have to struggle through their day dealing with pain, numbness, or tingling in their feet or ankles. We also believe that most foot issues can be resolved with the proper care and treatment – our goal is to get you back to the activities you love as soon as possible!

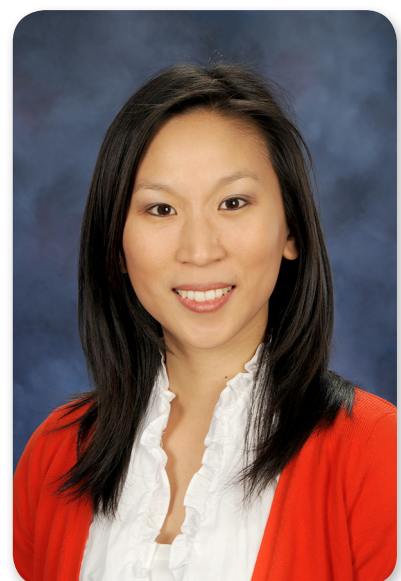
My team and I have helped over 10,000 patients find relief from foot and ankle pain since 2015, and we're confident we can help you, too! As you read this report, you will learn information about how our custom-made orthotics can improve many common foot disorders. I will also discuss the different types of orthotics and how we take precise measurements and diagnostics to ensure you are getting truly the best fit for your foot.

If you find yourself with any unanswered questions by the end of this report, feel free to contact our friendly team - we will be more than happy to answer all your questions. If you have already seen another podiatrist about your foot or ankle pain, I also invite you to contact me for a second opinion before you make a decision regarding treatment – your health and happiness are our main concern at Charlotte Foot Care Associates!

To your happy, healthy feet,

Dr. Sherry Lu, DPM

P.S. When you are ready to learn more about orthotics and the available treatment options for yourself or a loved one, call us at 704.834.1639 and request your Comprehensive New Patient Exam. I look forward to meeting you!



What Are Orthotics?

Orthotics are special shoe inserts designed to fit inside normal footwear to add cushioning, support, stabilization, or even correct certain conditions in your feet and ankles. Orthotics are prescribed and molded by an experienced podiatrist to help relieve pain brought on by pressure or incorrect structural abnormalities in the foot.

Prescription insoles or orthotics are different from the shoe inserts or arch supports you might find at a convenience store, pharmacy or online. These types of pre-fabricated inserts are made to handle general issues for the average foot, which means they cannot correct your unique biomechanical problems. In some cases, they can be helpful for providing a layer of cushioning and support. The wrong type of supports, however, can improperly change the way you walk or add pressure to a different part of your foot and end up causing additional pain and discomfort.

Medically prescribed orthotics designed by a podiatrist are custom made for your unique feet and more effectively target and correct preexisting conditions to relieve your foot pain. Unlike over-the-counter inserts that tend to quickly lose their form, customized orthotics are built to last through wear and tear for an extended period of time.



How Do Orthotics Help Heal Your Foot or Heel Injury?

Here are some common foot conditions treated with customized orthotics:

1. Sprained Ankle

An ankle sprain is an injury that results from torn ligaments and trauma to the ankle. For those who play sports or exercise regularly, an ankle sprain is a dreaded injury that can leave you unable to participate in your favorite activities for weeks. Although painful, ankle sprains are usually minor injuries that will heal just fine when given the proper rest and treatment. Using orthotics, such as a lateral heel wedge can help stabilize your ankle for proper healing.



2. Plantar Fasciitis

Another ailment treatable with orthotics is plantar fasciitis, an inflammation of the tissue that runs across the bottom of your foot and connects your heel bone to your toes. According to our podiatrist, plantar fasciitis is one of the most common causes of heel pain. It primarily occurs in runners, overweight patients, and people who don't wear supportive shoes. Most people suffering from plantar fasciitis will recover with rest, but you may need custom-fitted orthotics that offer support and help distribute pressure to your feet evenly.

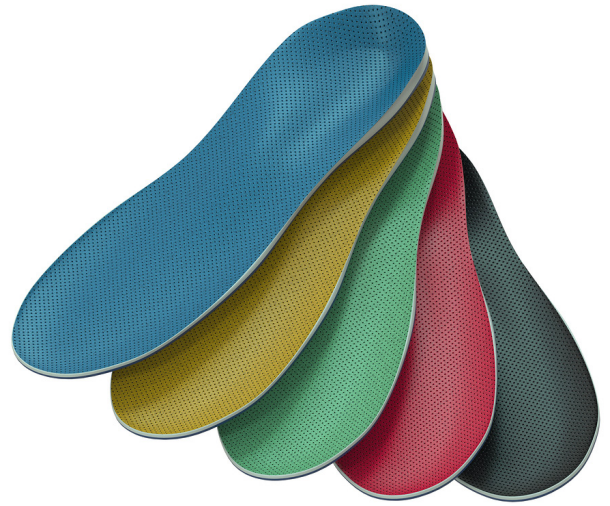
3. Flat Feet

Most feet have an arch that provides a pressure-absorbing connection between the forefoot and the hind foot. This connection allows the foot to support the weight of the body while helping to reduce the chance of injury. Some people have painful flat feet, however, caused by stretched tendons, broken bones, nerve issues, arthritis, or simply genetics. Custom-made orthotic shoe inserts relieve pain by providing the appropriate structural support for your flat feet. With proper use, patients with flat feet will be able to return to the activities they love, pain-free.



What Are the Different Types of Orthotics?

The use of orthotics in shoes allows people to stand, walk, and run more efficiently and comfortably. While over-the-counter orthotics may help with mild symptoms, they cannot correct the wide range of symptoms that prescription orthotics fitted for your unique foot structure can. Orthotic devices come in many shapes, sizes, and materials and fall into three main categories: those designed to change foot function, those that are primarily protective in nature, and those that combine functional control and protection.



■ **Rigid Orthotics**

Rigid orthotic devices are designed to control function and are used primarily for walking or dress shoes. They are often composed of a firm material, such as polypropylene or carbon fiber. Rigid orthotics control motion in the two major foot joints that lie directly below the ankle joint and may improve or eliminate strains, aches, and pains in the legs, thighs, and lower back.

■ **Soft Orthotics**

Soft orthotics are generally used to absorb shock, increase balance, and take pressure off uncomfortable or sore spots. They are usually effective for diabetic, arthritic, and deformed feet. Soft orthotics are typically made up of soft, cushioned materials so that they can be worn against the sole of the foot, extending from the heel past the ball of the foot, including the toes.

■ **Semi-Rigid Orthotics**

Semi-rigid orthotics provide foot balance for walking or participating in sports. The typical semi-rigid orthotic is made up of layers of soft material, reinforced with more rigid materials. Semi-rigid orthotics are often prescribed for children to treat flatfoot and in-toeing or out-toeing disorders. These types of orthotics are also used to help athletes mitigate pain while they train and compete.

Make an Appointment with Our Office to Find Out What Type of Orthotics Are Right for You

How Are Orthotics Made?

The shape, design, and purpose of the custom orthotics depend on your symptoms and an evaluation by an experienced podiatrist. Your foot care specialist will complete a full exam to determine your exact needs. Based on the complete analysis of your lower limbs, the podiatrist then molds your shoe inserts to match your feet to target and correct your precise foot condition. That way your insoles, arch supports, heel cups, or any other orthotics are customized to your unique feet and movement style.

Our foot care team knows that foot pain can limit your mobility and independence, but the good news is that many painful problems that affect the lower limbs are easily treatable with prescription orthotics.



Don't Live Your Life in Pain

- Contact Us for an Evaluation

Dear Friend,

I hope you have found this report informative! At this time, I would like to invite you to contact my office with any remaining questions you may have about orthotics and how our customized treatment option can help your ongoing ankle or foot condition. Our friendly, experienced team is here for you!

Also, when you feel ready to take the next step, call Charlotte Foot Care Associates to schedule your Comprehensive New Patient Exam. Your consultation with me includes a complete physical exam of all podiatry systems such as muscle strength, joints, foot structure, range of motion, arterial and vein systems, wound or rash assessment, and a comprehensive skin analysis. We will take the time to educate you on your options and answer any questions you may have – your happiness and comfort are our top priorities!

Don't live your life struggling with foot or ankle pain - our team is ready to join you on your exciting journey to a pain-free life. Call us at 704.834.1639 today!

To your happy, healthy feet,

Dr. Sherry Lu, DPM

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