



Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

What is Orthotics?

Information for patients



What is Orthotics?

Orthotics is the science and art of designing and fitting Orthoses. It involves the assessment and treatment of muscles, tendons, ligaments, bones, joints, nerves, and other structures to:

- Improve your movement and strength.
- Help you to do more of your normal activities.
- Help you reduce or manage your pain.
- Help you to understand and manage your problem with our support.

“Orthoses are externally applied devices used to compensate for impairments of the structure and function of the neuro-muscular and skeletal systems.” ISO.

An Orthosis may also be called a ‘brace’, or ‘splint’. Examples of orthosis include insoles, footwear adaptations, helmets, spinal brace, knee and shoulder braces.

Information on our orthotic service can be found on the following website or by scanning the QR code below:

Website: www.ouh.nhs.uk/orthotics



Arriving for your appointment

You can find us at The Tebbit Centre across the road from the main entrance of the Nuffield Orthopaedic centre. Further information on how to find us can be found by scanning this QR code:



Please arrive 10 minutes before your appointment. When you arrive, please check in at the desk then have a seat in reception.

If you are more than 10 minutes late, we may not have the capacity to see you and your appointment may have to be re-arranged.

We will try not to keep you waiting. If you have been waiting more than 10 minutes, then please speak to the receptionist.

Help with specific needs

If you have any sight, hearing or memory problems, need an interpreter or have any other specific needs or requests please let us know when you book your appointment or before you arrive.

If you would like a chaperone to be present, please either contact the administration team on 01865 227 750 prior to your appointment or speak to the receptionist on arrival.

If you would prefer to be seen by a female or male orthotist then you must speak to a member of the admin team when you receive your appointment rather than on the day, as we may not have capacity to change your orthotist at such short notice.

Transport

Under certain circumstances, patients or visitors may be entitled to use the patient transport service provided by South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust to attend appointments. To request ambulance transport to attend hospital:

Telephone: 0300 100 0015

Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm.

How to cancel or change your appointment

Please phone 01865 227 570 with as much notice as possible (Telephones will be answered from 8.30am to 3.00pm) or email orthotics.department@ouh.nhs.uk.

If you do not attend your appointment without cancelling or rearranging beforehand, we may discharge you and send your referral back to your referrer/GP. This does not apply if you have an urgent appointment or if the appointment is for a child or vulnerable adult. This in line with Trust policies on missed appointments.

What to bring to your appointment?

- Appropriate clothing to allow the affected area to be assessed. You may be requested to remove certain items of clothing to allow the assessment to be conducted.
- Any previous orthotic devices you may have.
- Footwear with a secure fastening (laces or Velcro), preferably with a removable insole, if your problem is relating to your lower limbs.
- If you are experiencing foot and ankle pain, then please try wearing lace-up trainers full time whilst you are waiting for your appointment as it may help to reduce your symptoms.

What to expect in an appointment?

You will be assessed by an Orthotist. As we are a teaching hospital you might be seen by a student orthotist working under supervision, however, you do have the right to decline this. We will ask questions about your problem and everything you tell us is confidential. The physical assessment will involve the orthotist touching the affected area, testing your movements and strength. You may also be asked to walk barefoot for the orthotist to assess your gait.

Assessment appointments are usually between 40 and 60 minutes, which includes time for the Orthotist to document their notes and write any appropriate orders.

After your assessment, we will discuss your problem, agree goals and set a treatment plan with you. We may also offer advice or exercises on how you can manage your problem yourself. You are free to withdraw your consent to assessment or treatment at any time.

You may be provided with an orthosis on the day or may have to attend for further fitting appointments. The orthotist will discuss this with you. We may need to capture the shape of your limb/ body part in order to fabricate a device. There are several methods we can use to achieve this as described below. Your orthotist will decide which is the most appropriate and discuss with you.

- Foam impression box – foot pushed into a box of foam.
- Cast – wrapping the limb in plaster of Paris bandaging.
- Scanning – using 3D light scanners on iPads.

Review appointments

At the appointment your Orthotist will discuss with you whether a review appointment is required. We operate a 5 year open review system, which means that if you require an orthotics review then you can call the department and book an appointment directly, without having to be re-referred by your GP as long as it is within 5 years from when you last saw an Orthotist.

How can I get the most out of treatment?

Please ask your orthotist to clarify if there is anything you do not understand. Help yourself and us by following any agreed advice and exercises we give you and attending your appointments on time.

Comments and suggestions

We welcome comments and suggestions about any aspect of your attendance to the hospital. Please speak with a member of staff or you can fill out our Friends and Family Test - you may receive a **text** or an **interactive voice message** (IVM) on your landline after you leave hospital requesting your feedback.

Alternatively you can provide feedback via email at: orthotics.department@ouh.nhs.uk or the Trust patient experience team at: patient.experience@ouh.nhs.uk.

Privacy, dignity and respect

We respect your privacy and dignity at all times and do not tolerate any physical, verbal or emotional abuse of our staff, whether they are a clinical, administrative or technical members of our team.

Complaints

If you have a concern about your care or treatment, or about any of our services, please talk to the member of staff who is with you at the time. They will be as helpful as possible and may be able to resolve your concerns straight away.

If it is not possible to resolve your concerns immediately, we will respond by letter or may be able to offer a face-to-face meeting depending on what would be most appropriate.

Contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) for help, advice and support.

Telephone: 01865 221 473

Email: PALS@ouh.nhs.uk

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
www.ouh.nhs.uk/information



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