

Do you need an Orthotic for Plantar Fasciitis?

If your foot pain is not improving, you may want to try an orthotic shoe insert. However, you should first try the recommendations put forth in our videos. You might also try a simple taping technique first to see if you get some relief. See video: *Simplest Taping Technique EVER for Plantar Fasciitis*

An *orthotic shoe insert* is a device inserted into a shoe (which is lacking proper foot support). With someone who has plantar fasciitis, the main goal of an orthotic insert is to provide more arch support and take stress off the fascia.

We are not experts on orthotics, but we are comfortable in saying the following:

1. When we recommend an orthotic- what we are really saying is an insole. You will normally have an original insole in your shoe. The original insole will be removed and replaced. The new insole should provide you with more arch support- where it is needed it the most.
2. An orthotic (insole) may help your plantar fasciitis. It is certainly worth a try.
3. We would recommend an off the shelf, less expensive type of insole to start.
4. The fit of the insole is very important.
5. The insole should feel better right away. You should not have to break it in.
6. We would recommend an insole that can pass the squish test. (see below)
7. Lifespan for an over the counter insole may be only 6 months, but by that point you may no longer need it.
8. The insole may need some trimming. Follow directions. You can pull the old insole out from your shoe and use it as a pattern.
9. As an alternative- a heel cup may cushion and raise your heel, and thus provide some relief.

Tests to do on your orthotic insert.

Squish test. Using your finger and thumb squish the arch of the orthotic. It should be able to withstand your pressure and NOT collapse. Some over-the-counter orthotics are made from soft materials that go flat as soon as you step on them--these are the ones you want to avoid. Instead, go with ones that are made from plastic polymer or a hard plastic, as these are more rigid and offer greater support.

Another option is going with a moldable insole that allow you to mold the precise shape of your foot using heat treatment. The problem with moldable orthotics is that if you do not get a proper imprint, your insoles will be useless.

Standing Gap Test. When standing on the orthoses there should NOT be any gap between the orthosis and your arch.

Heel Lift Gap. In a seated position raise your heel off the ground while holding the orthotic in place. There should be no gapping in the arch while doing so.

Taper off orthotics – if pain free for six months.