

# Safety footwear for diabetic patients



## Information for patients

### Orthotics



## **Why do I need advice about my footwear?**

You have been sent to the Orthotic Department because you have had a foot ulcer, or are at high risk of developing an ulcer or other foot problem caused by your diabetes. You may also have one or more of the following problems:

- Bony changes in your feet, for example, bunions, clawed toes, Charcot deformity
- Permanently swollen feet
- Reduced or altered sensation
- Unusually shaped feet
- Difficulty buying shoes from shops

It is important that you always wear footwear that protects your feet and reduces the risk of you developing further diabetic foot problems.

## **I have to wear safety footwear for work**

The hard toe caps on safety footwear can easily rub diabetic feet so it is important there is plenty of depth in the footwear you buy for work. Try the footwear on rather than just having a standard provision shoe from your work place. You should be able to request this through your Human Resources Department.

There are many different brands of safety footwear, though we advise you buy shoes with a thick insole. This will allow us to remove and replace them with insoles specifically made to protect the bottom of your feet without compromising the fit of the footwear. Try to buy footwear with a soft lining, minimal internal seams and plenty of cushioning inside.

If you have severe deformities in your feet and cannot fit safely into any safety footwear available commercially the orthotic department can make some for you to British Standards (BS EN 20 345-1). Due to the complexity of achieving a good fit, you will need to attend when the

footwear is half made. This ensures it can be altered to improve the fit. You will then have another appointment to be supplied with the completed footwear. Safety footwear normally takes about 10 weeks to complete. After 6-8 weeks when you have carefully bedded in your footwear, the orthotist will check it at a review appointment.

Any footwear can still cause rubbing and your feet may change shape and size as your diabetes progresses. It is important that you check your feet regularly for areas of rubbing, and check your footwear for signs of wear.

## **What happens next?**

Safety footwear is very expensive for the hospital to provide so only one pair will be provided at a time. Once it is worn out another pair will be supplied. It is only provided while you are employed and have to wear it for your job.

Please clean your footwear regularly with cream or polish.

The footwear should be returned regularly to the department for repair and review.

## **Tell us what you think**

Our team is always interested in your comments on the items provided and the service you receive.

Please feel free to phone or write to the manager, if you wish to give us any feedback.

# Orthotic Department

Mobility & Specialised Rehabilitation Centre  
Northern General Hospital  
Herries Road  
Sheffield S5 7AU

- **0114 271 5807**

Opening times: Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm



To help support your local hospitals visit  
[sheffieldhospitalscharity.org.uk](https://sheffieldhospitalscharity.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. 1165762



**Alternative formats can be available on request.  
Please email: [alternativeformats@sth.nhs.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@sth.nhs.uk)**

© **Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust 2019**

Re-use of all or any part of this document is governed by copyright and the "Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005" SI 2005 No. 1515. Information on re-use can be obtained from the Information Governance Department, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals. Email [infogov@sth.nhs.uk](mailto:infogov@sth.nhs.uk)