

Choosing the Right Shoe Inserts

Why Use Shoe Inserts?

Shoe inserts (orthotics) provide **extra support, cushioning, and alignment** to reduce **foot pain, fatigue, and discomfort**. They help with conditions like **flat feet, plantar fasciitis, overpronation, and arthritis** while improving overall foot function.

Types of Shoe Inserts

1. Arch Supports

- ✓ Best for **flat feet, high arches, or overpronation**
- ✓ Helps distribute weight evenly and reduce strain
- ✓ Available in **low, medium, or high arch support**

2. Cushioning Insoles

- ✓ Best for **heel pain, metatarsalgia (ball of foot pain), or arthritis**
- ✓ Provides **extra padding** to absorb shock
- ✓ Made of **gel, foam, or memory foam**

3. Orthotic Insoles (Semi-Rigid or Rigid)

- ✓ Best for **plantar fasciitis, overpronation, or foot misalignment**
- ✓ Provides **structural correction and stability**
- ✓ Often made of **plastic, carbon fiber, or firm foam**

4. Heel Cups & Heel Wedges

- ✓ Best for **heel pain, Achilles tendonitis, or heel spurs**
- ✓ Helps absorb impact and relieve pressure on the heel

5. Metatarsal Pads

- ✓ Best for **ball of foot pain, Morton's neuroma, or bunions**
- ✓ Reduces pressure on the forefoot and improves toe alignment

How to Choose the Right Shoe Insert

- ✓ **Identify your foot issue** - Heel pain, arch pain, or overall foot fatigue?
- ✓ **Choose the right support level** - Soft inserts for cushioning, rigid inserts for correction.
- ✓ **Ensure proper fit** - Inserts should match your foot size and arch type.
- ✓ **Consider activity level** - Athletes may need high-impact shock absorption.
- ✓ **Test comfort** - Inserts should feel supportive but not too hard or restrictive.

When to See a Doctor for Custom Orthotics

Severe foot pain or ongoing discomfort
Flat feet, high arches, or foot deformities
Diabetes-related foot problems or poor circulation
No improvement with over-the-counter inserts

Bottom Line

- ✓ **Shoe inserts can improve comfort and support for various foot conditions.**
- ✓ **Match the insert type to your specific foot problem.**
- ✓ **Ensure proper fit and comfort before daily use.**
- ✓ **Seek medical advice if pain persists despite using inserts.**

Click here for more orthopedic patient information.

Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.