

Your child's footwear adaptations

This leaflet is about your child's footwear adaptations. If you have any questions please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for your child.

About your child's footwear adaptations

Your child has been prescribed footwear adaptations to help manage their condition. Footwear adaptations are changes made to the shoes to help reduce pressure or pain, reduce unwanted or unsafe movements, and provide more support.

There are different types of footwear adaptations, which can include:

- a raise to address differences in leg length, and improve your child's balance
- a rocker sole to help prevent the foot from bending, and reduce painful movements
- sockets to accommodate your child's orthosis (such as an ankle-foot orthosis)

Choosing shoes

Footwear adaptations are usually added to your own footwear. Your child's existing shoes can still be worn as long as they're a suitable style and are safe to be adapted.

Suitable shoes

- Shoes that have an adjustable, secure fastening such as lace, Velcro or a buckle.
- Shoes with a solid sole, with moderate to low heel height and a wide base.

Shoes that are not suitable

- Shoes with gel or air bubbles (usually found in trainers).
- Shoes with a complex construction, such as shoes with springs.
- Shoes that are very flexible and flimsy, with a thin heel and sole.
- Shoes that are not supportive, such as sandals or open toe shoes.
- Slip on shoes.

Wearing instructions

If your child is wearing a prescription for the first time, it's important that they follow the gentle 'breaking in' process recommended by their orthotist. Try and build up the wearing time until your child feels comfortable and confident.

During the breaking in period, and in the first few weeks your child might notice:

- a stretching sensation
- some discomfort in the major joints of their lower back and legs

This is normal, and expected as their body is adapting to a new posture. If your child has any discomfort, they should stop wearing the adapted footwear for the rest of the day. They can start wearing them again the next day.

Contact the orthotics service if the discomfort lasts for more than a week. After the first few weeks of use your child should be wearing their adapted footwear consistently, especially when walking for longer distances.

Getting your child's footwear adapted

Your child will need to be assessed by the orthotics service to have their footwear adapted.

If your child is a patient at **Sunshine House** or **the Mary Sheridan Centre**, their footwear can be dropped off at either of these sites:

- Sunshine House Children and Young People's Development Centre, 27 Peckham Road, London, SE5 8UH
- Mary Sheridan Centre, Wooden Spoon House, 5 Dugard Way, London SE11 4TH

If your child is a patient at **Bowley Close** or **King's College**, their footwear can be dropped off at either of these sites:

- Bowley Close Rehabilitation Centre, Farquhar Road, London, SE19 1SZ
- King's College Hospital Orthotics service, ground floor, Cheyne Wing, King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

You do not need an appointment. Please include your child's name, date of birth, medical records number (if known) and address or postcode on a piece of paper, with their footwear.

We'll contact you to collect your child's footwear when they're ready. We aim to provide 2 complete adaptations in the first 12 months. If your child needs more than this, there will be a charge.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's adapted footwear, please contact the orthotics service that their appointment is with.

If your child is a patient at **Bowley Close regional rehabilitation centre, Sunshine House**, or **Mary Sheridan Centre** [phone](tel:02030397776) 020 3039 7776 or [email](mailto:gst-tr.gsttorthoticreferrals@nhs.net) gst-tr.gsttorthoticreferrals@nhs.net

If your child is a patient at **King's College Hospital** [phone](tel:02032993646) 020 3299 3646, or [email](mailto:gst-tr.orthoticreferral@nhs.net) gst-tr.orthoticreferral@nhs.net

Your appointment letter will tell you who your appointment is with, and where to go for your child's appointment.

Leaflet number: 4457/VER2

Date published: April 2025

Review date: April 2028

© 2025 Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

A list of sources is available on request

