



PHYSICAL THERAPY  
WELLNESS CENTER  
PELVIC HEALTH



# HOW CUSTOM ORTHOTICS RELIEVE PAIN AND RESTORE FUNCTION

Is pain in your feet making it difficult to stay active? Do you get knee, hip, or lower back pain when you are trying to play your favorite sport?

You may benefit from having one of our skilled physical therapists at G3 Physical Therapy help uncover the underlying causes of your pain!

Foot health is critical and an often overlooked underlying cause of joint pain throughout your lower body and spine. After all, your feet are responsible for supporting your entire body when you stand, walk or run. Your feet are also the foundation for maintaining your alignment, posture, and healthy biomechanics when you are doing any weight-bearing activity.

The type of shoes we wear, the amount of time we spend on our feet, and the type of activities we enjoy can affect the health of our feet. Additionally, our foot type can contribute to abnormal stresses on our knees, hips, and lower back, causing pain.

One way to alleviate these issues is to use a custom or semi-custom orthotic that we make at G3 Physical Therapy. Orthotics are not a one-size-fits-all proposition; there are many different types and sources of orthotics these days that we will explain more about below.

If you are searching for an orthotic device and unsure where to turn, G3 Physical Therapy can help. Contact us today to learn how custom and semi-custom orthotics can help you function pain-free and move with ease through your daily life! If you already have orthotics, you can bring those in too for us to assess if they can be optimized.

We have a strategic approach to deciding on what kind of orthotic you need, or if you need them at all. There are several things you need to know...

## 1) Do you have pain?

Pain is usually the first indication that you might benefit from an orthotic. Orthotics can have immediate and quick results, especially for young athletes that are experiencing foot, ankle, or knee pain with running. For those that have genu-valgum or “knock knees” with knee pain, orthotics are also often helpful. Depending on your activity level or age, hip or lower back pain can also be helped with better support from the ground up. But sometimes pain can be alleviated with the right kind of stretches and other mobility exercises. So it’s usually a combination of signs and symptoms that we factor in before we recommend orthotics.

## 2) What kind of foot type do you have?

Identifying your foot type and structure helps to determine what kind of support and orthotic you need. Generally speaking, there are 2 broad foot types that can be problematic. For some quick terminology, a stiff or cavus foot usually has a higher arch that doesn’t collapse or pronate properly and stays in a supinated or “uncollapsed” position. This foot type is not a good shock absorber, which can cause excess stress to be transferred to other joints and soft tissues further up the body. This foot type often responds well to orthotics.

Visit Us Online [g3.life](https://g3.life) or Call Today 760.452.2640

# STEP INTO A PAIN-FREE LIFE!

A floppy or planus foot is where the arch falls too much and stays in that pronated or collapsed position, and does not supinate or stiffen up to restore its arch. This foot type is more common and often responds well to generic arch supports if there are no other structural factors involved. The ideal foot will both pronate and supinate during walking or running. When you walk or run, you want your foot to pronate when your foot first hits the ground. That's when it loads and helps your ankle, knees, and hips bend to both shock absorb and simulate a coiling mechanism to generate power. It's what we call loading before the explode. The explode is when the coil spring lets go and the body lengthens and pivots to propel forward.

### 3) How to choose between a custom, semi custom, or off the shelf?

In general, the further a foot is out on that structural spectrum, the more likely it is that a more nuanced orthotic is needed to solve pain issues. This is due to the fact that a super high arch or a super flat arch usually has forefoot and rearfoot components that must be addressed in order to address the underlying problem.

#### Custom Orthotics

Custom orthotics go beyond merely supporting the arch. Oftentimes, leg or low back pain that is caused by foot issues require a more complicated foot solution, and how the orthotic is made can make a big difference. For custom orthotics, we prefer to cast your feet to capture the real structural shape of your foot, compared to something you step on. Because of gravity and your bodyweight, stepping on a platform usually loses the actual shape and correction needed. An easy illustration that I give patients is that the foot should have 4 points of contact to the ground that's leveled, like four legs of a table. But if there is a shorter leg of the table, the table will wobble and we fold paper to stick under the table so it becomes stable. A custom orthotic allows us to assess if your foot is unstable beyond just a fallen arch. We can add support in your heel and towards the front under the ball of your foot to make a leveled foundation for the rest of your body to function upon. You get an orthotic completely tailored to specific structural needs of your feet.



#### Semi Custom Orthotics

We use a device called Formthotics that provides various levels of insole support, it's heated to fit your shoe, and we further add different support in the forefoot or rearfoot to make sure your foot is leveled and stable. This is often a good option for those that are active in lower impact activities like walking or golfing. This is also a good option for children with growing feet to avoid the cost of a custom orthotic until their feet stop growing.

### 4) What kind of activity is giving you pain and what kind of activities would you like to return to?

Two common ailments of growing children are knee pain (known as Osgood-Schlatters disease) and heel pain (known as Sever's disease). These ailments are often called "growing pains" and surprisingly few solutions are presented. Our experience has shown us that these issues are primarily foot issues that are readily treatable with a good custom orthotic. We have had a great deal of success using custom orthotics as the primary solution to these problems.

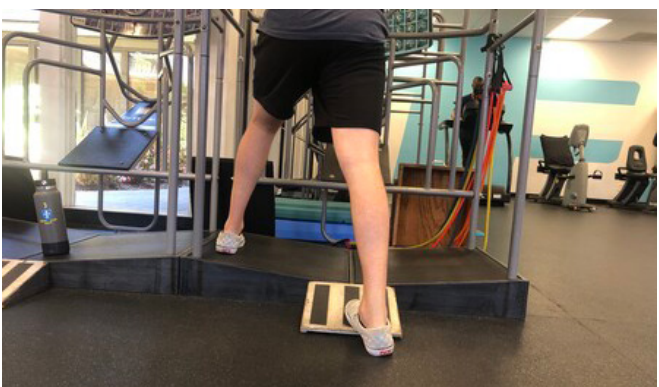
For other joint or soft tissue issues that we consider "repetitive stress injuries" such as foot/ankle pain, knee pain, hip pain, or lower back pain, orthotics are often an important component of a more comprehensive physical therapy plan that involves mobility/flexibility treatments and exercises as well as strengthening exercises.

The bottom line is that orthotics can often be an important part of a comprehensive physical therapy plan to take away your pain and restore your activity level. Not all orthotics are created equal, and choosing the right orthotic can make the difference between a successful outcome and one that is not successful. If you are experiencing pain and a loss of function, schedule an appointment with one of our Doctors of physical therapy to see if orthotics are a key to getting you back to your desired activities.

# EXERCISE OF THE MONTH

## 3-WAY CALF STRETCH

It's important to stretch the calf muscles in different directions because the calf muscles have fibers that connect from your heel to above your knee, both inside and outside. Because of the calf muscles' attachments, it directly helps control your foot and knee. It also indirectly does many other things; make sure to ask one of our PTs what else the calf muscle does.



SCHEDULE YOUR  
APPOINTMENT  
**TODAY!**



**760.452.2640**

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

One way to help manage inflammation is by eating nutritious foods. This cookbook with yummy recipes focuses on using nutritious ingredients that are gluten-free and low in sugar. This is one of our family favorites, as you can tell the book has been well used. Enjoy!



Click the Amazon  
button to find  
this book online!



## WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR SUCCESS STORY!

Click below to tell your PT story and leave your review. We look forward to hearing from you!

★ ENCINITAS  
LOCATION

★ SOLANA BEACH  
LOCATION

Visit us at [g3.life](https://g3.life) today!



PHYSICAL THERAPY  
WELLNESS CENTER  
PELVIC HEALTH

227 N. El Camino Real, Suite 100  
Encinitas, CA 92024

740 Lomas Santa Fe, Suite 208  
Solana Beach, CA 92075

P: 760.452.2640  
F: 760.452.2643

g3.life  
Mon-Fri: 7:00 am-7:00 pm