

Why You Need Custom Orthotics

Everyone knows orthotics can fix aching feet, but it's what you don't know they can do that might surprise you. Here, podiatrist Dr. Danielle Shaper reveals all.



As a ballet dancer, Dr. Shaper possesses a unique understanding of how the foot impacts stability, precision and getting your balance just right. She treats foot and ankle issues ranging from ingrown toenails to bunions, hammertoes, plantar fasciitis, corns, warts, calluses, sprained ankles, heel pain, spurs and more.

by Patricia Nugent

When podiatrist Dr. Danielle L. Shaper opened *Finesse Footcare* in Lyndhurst this fall, she introduced to the area a heightened level of focused, highly personalized foot care. And as owner, she also now has more power to affect change.

This month she's kicking off a campaign to outfit local first responders with custom orthotics shoe inserts.

"These heroes are on their feet all day and deserve recognition for their selfless work," she says. "Police officers and fire fighters so often go unacknowledged. They are the ones taking care of us and protecting us out there, and I want to help take care of them for a change."

From now through next spring, for every pair of orthotics she fits a patient, she will give a free pair, including fitting, to a first responder.

"I hope we get a terrific response to this, as custom orthotic inserts can be a game-changer for aching feet," she says.

Realigning the Foot, Fixing the Gait

As a ballet dancer, Dr. Shaper possesses a unique understanding of how the foot impacts stability, precision and getting your balance just right. To achieve that, like many of her patients, she wears custom orthotics inserts in her shoes every day.

"The goal of orthotics is to change the biomechanics



Photography: Benjamin Margalit

Working with Forward Motion 3D custom orthotics, Dr. Danielle Shaper digitally casts a person's foot for an ideal fit. No more messy plaster casts, and the orthotics are back from the lab in just a couple weeks instead of months with the old casting technique.



of the foot," she says. "They treat many conditions, from collapsed arch to high arch to realigning a patient's gait. In some cases, they can be preventive as well, and help us avoid surgery."

Sometimes a person will have knee or hip pain, and the root cause is actually a misalignment of the foot.

"I've cast a patient as young as six who had gait instability issues," she says. "The earlier you can correct these conditions, the better."

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Full Spectrum of Foot Care

Through state-of-the-art digital X-rays, Dr. Shaper can get a clear picture of each patient's foot structure and help



in pinpointing a diagnosis and course of treatment. She likes to start with the most conservative path first.

Treating foot and ankle issues ranging from ingrown toenails to bunions, hammertoes, plantar fasciitis, corns, warts,

calluses and sprained ankles to diabetic footcare, heel pain and spurs, sports medicine and surgery are all within her wheelhouse of training and expertise.

Staying current with breakthrough technology is important to Dr. Shaper. Recently she introduced a new method of treating toenail fungus: Microdrilling.

Via a hand-held wand, she painlessly drills very tiny holes into the nail plate without puncturing the nail bed. The goal is to create a path for topical medications to reach the fungal area under the nail.

She says it takes just one or two treatments and has been found to be more effective and more affordable than lasers or taking oral medications, which can have unpleasant side effects.

Finesse Footcare is located at 5035 Mayfield Road in Lyndhurst. Same-day appointments are usually available. The practice accepts a wide variety of insurance plans. Dr. Danielle Shaper is a board-certified podiatric physician with the American Board of Podiatric Medicine. Call 216-382-8070 or visit FinesseFootcare.com for more information.

FIRST RESPONDER CAMPAIGN

For every pair of custom-fit orthotics Dr. Danielle Shaper creates for a patient, she will donate one pair to a local first responder.



She'll even bring a mobile digital caster to the first responder so he or she does not have to come into the office to be fitted. Go to FinesseFootcare.com to register.