

Louis J. DeCaro, DPM

Dr. DeCaro is in private practice in West Hatfield. Dr. DeCaro specializes in biomechanics and Pediatrics. He is chairman of the education committee of the Massachusetts Podiatric Medical Society and serves as a Board Member for the state Podiatry Society. Dr. DeCaro, along with Dr. Paknia, Dr. Perkins, Ms. Nole and Ms. Bastedo, conducts a Biomechanical Gait Analysis Clinic in his West Hatfield office. Dr. DeCaro serves all ages with a focus on pediatrics. Since being in private practice, Dr. DeCaro has successfully applied the 24 foot type model. This has helped his practice grow, has allowed him to treat his patients more effectively, and has bridged the gap with the patients' understanding of biomechanics and the need for orthotic support.

Daniel P. Paknia, DPM

Dr. Paknia is in private practice with Dr. DeCaro and Dr. Perkins in West Hatfield. Dr. Paknia specializes in wound care, diabetic foot care and biomechanical deformities. He is a member of the American Podiatric Medical Association and works closely with Dr. DeCaro and Dr. Perkins in delivering the Gait Analysis Clinic to his patients.

Roberta Nole, M.A., P.T., C.Ped.

Roberta Nole is owner of Stride Custom Orthotics and Stride Physical Therapy and Pedorthic Center in Middlebury, CT. She has developed a clinical practice specializing in biomechanical foot and ankle examination and orthotic treatment and has been practicing in this area for 20 years. She has written and instructs a continuing education lecture series based on the basic biomechanical foot and ankle examination, and advanced level educational courses in gait analysis and foot typing. She is an adjunct professor of physical therapy at Quinnipiac University, Hamden, CT, where she is conducting her research on the development of a 24 foot type adult foot classification method. She has been a Board Certified Pedorthist since 1993, and is a member of the American Physical Therapy Association and the Pedorthic Footwear Association.

Brenda Bastedo

Brenda Bastedo is the laboratory manager for Stride Orthotics in which she oversees the fabrication, production, and refurbishment of all UCB orthotics made through their laboratory. Ms. Bastedo has over 15 years experience in evaluation, treatment, fabrication and dispensing of orthotics.

*10 West St.
West Hatfield, MA 01088
(413) 397-8900*

www.DeCaroPodiatry.com

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**DeCaro Total FootCare Center
Podiatric Medicine & Foot Surgery**

Louis J. DeCaro, DPM

Daniel P. Paknia, DPM

Patient Manual

**Your Intro to Our Gait Analysis Clinic
& Custom Orthoses Program**



Building a Lifetime of Happier & Healthier Feet

www.DeCaroPodiatry.com

Congratulations on taking the next step to having healthier, happier feet and a more pain free existence! You have chosen a biomechanical treatment of your condition which not only will help you feel better now, but may prevent additional symptoms from occurring as you get older.

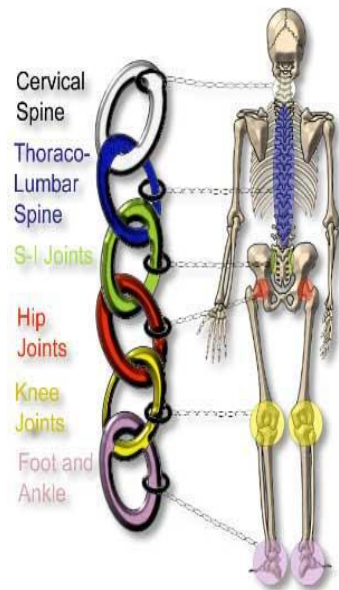
Did you know that our adult feet are essentially formed by the time we are six years old? Sure, they keep growing, but the way that they will function for the rest of our lives is already established in our genetic make up and manifests in our early childhood. Barring any trauma or medical procedures, we have our basic foot type at six years of age.

And then the pounding starts!

Stop for a moment and try to truly understand the enormous pressures that our feet sustain in a day, much less a lifetime. Now, imagine a building with an imperfect foundation. Depending on the extent of the problems with the foundation, that building may tilt, sway, not support heavy loads or collapse.

Our bodies are the same way, and our feet are our foundation. So, if you have foot pain, knee pain, hip pain, back pain, even shoulder pain, it may all be coming from your feet. The professionals call this the **kinetic chain effect**.

THE KINETIC CHAIN



7. **After removing your new orthotics during the first two weeks of wearing them, inspect both feet for new red marks, blisters or sores.** If you see any of these, please stop wearing them and call our office immediately. You must check your feet after taking off your orthotics to prevent injury.
8. **Picking out shoes:** Please make sure that you take your orthotics with you to pick out each and every pair of shoes you anticipate wearing them in. It is important that your foot and the orthotics fit in new shoes before spending the money.
9. **Worn Shoes:** Your orthotics should not be worn with any shoe which is deemed worn out. Check for excessive wearing of the heel (wedging of one side), increased bendiness of the middle arch of the shoe or any holes within the shoe.
10. **Choosing the Right Shoe:** Please follow these simple rules, as well as previous individual suggestions by our staff to help you find the best type of shoe to allow your orthotic to work with maximum effectiveness. A) The shoe should NOT bend in the arch. It should bend in the toe box. Take the shoe and hold it on the ends with both hands and press. See where it bends. B) Look at the bottom and sides of the shoe. There should be no fancy materials to control excessive motion. That is what you have the orthotics for! The shoes are there solely to provide your orthotic with the support it needs to do the job. C) Most Important: Make sure they fit comfortably!

Due to the custom nature of these inserts, they are not refundable.

Any Questions? Please do not hesitate to call us!

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Orthotic Dispensing & Break-In Instructions:

1. **Be patient with how many shoes they fit in.** You have received an ultra custom, ultra biomechanically-controlling orthotic device. These orthotics may be larger than you expected because they are crafted to serve you better than any other ever has. Wearing them in a sneaker or wide dress shoe may be your only option at first. It is our goal to maximally control your existing deleterious foot motion 100%. Later on, when you love your orthotics, you may request smaller dress/hybrid pairs which can be crafted to fit into a larger variety of shoe gear. Please note that this smaller orthotic may compromise the full effect of the orthoses but are a great, part-time solution.
2. **Break-In:** Wear your orthotics one hour the first day and then, for each subsequent day, increase your wearing time by one hour until you are comfortable wearing your orthotics full time. (Please see #5 below.)
3. **Orthotics should be worn with socks or stockings.** Failure to comply with this may cause blistering or pain within your foot.
4. **New orthoses occasionally squeak.** If you find this to be the case, use baby powder in the shoes to reduce the friction that causes the squeak. Eventually, with use, the squeaking will subside.
5. **In most cases, the break-in and “getting used to” accommodation period lasts about two weeks.** Occasionally, some discomfort may occur. Should this happen, reduce the wearing time by one half hour each day until the discomfort disappears. Proceed by gradually increasing your wearing time more slowly than before. If discomfort persists, make an appointment with one of our doctors.
6. **If you play sports, please do not wear your orthotics during sporting events until you are comfortable wearing them for 6-8 hours of non-sporting daily activities.** Begin by wearing them in your athletic shoes for a period of one to three hours for normal activities.

Now, let's consider for a moment a variety of things that can go wrong with our feet. First, our feet were designed to walk on paths and rough surfaces with rocks and roots and sand...not concrete and pavement. Our feet are supposed to be barefoot while walking on these rough surfaces...not clad in shoes! Until evolution catches up with our technological progress, we already have one strike against us. Now, take a look at your parents' feet or try to remember what your parents' feet looked like. Is there a history of bunions, flat feet, collapsed arches, ugly callouses, corns, blisters, pump bumps or hammertoes? Now, look at your feet. See any resemblance? That's how your feet may look as you get older if you don't intervene now. Is there a family history of knee, hip, back, or shoulder pain? You may also suffer from these ailments without orthotics. Our feet are genetically predisposed to work a certain way, affecting the kinetic chain. **Thus, we pass on the proverbial “baton of biomechanics” through generations.**



But we have good news for you. By being here today, you are correcting this predisposition and have taken your healthcare into your own hands.

Congratulations on making this decision!

“How can something like orthotics help so much?”

Well, it all relates to that building foundation. If you give yourself a good foundation, you will hold up better and longer.

And one thing you should understand. Not all orthotics are made the same. You have chosen **Stride orthotics**. These orthotics are **INDIVIDUALLY HANDCRAFTED** for each foot. These orthotics are not mass produced and taken off of a shelf somewhere to be handed to you. Your orthotics are not created until we have evaluated you clinically, physically, functionally and structurally. Then, if orthotics are deemed appropriate for you, we cast your feet in plaster and send those castings with all of your foot information to Stride Orthotics in Connecticut. Then, and only then, are your orthotics fabricated to your exact specifications as determined by the team of people you will meet. At Stride Orthotics, about 12 highly trained craftspeople will work together to create your orthotics.

“What if I have different foot types?”

No problem! Your left orthotic is made independently of your right orthotic. Different foot types are not a concern in regards to getting the correct orthotics for you.



Breaking in your orthotics correctly is very important. We like to have the patient wear the orthotics for one hour the first day, two hours the second day and increase the wear by an hour each following day. However, sometimes, due to a patient's specific foot type, it may be hard to tolerate this schedule. Note how you are feeling and how you are tolerating your orthotics. Remember, you did not get this way overnight, so it may take a little bit longer to re-adjust your body to its correct position. If you are experiencing difficulty breaking-in your orthotics, feel free to do this at a slower pace. Maybe you can do half an hour the first day and an hour on the second day. That is fine. Do what works for you! The goal is to give your body what it needs in a way that it can adjust willingly. If after wearing your orthotics full time for approximately two weeks, you are still having problems or new problems are developing, please call our office and schedule for an adjustment evaluation. Remember, sometimes we need to “tweak” your orthotics. We want them perfect for you.

Your orthotics work with your shoes to provide the best support for your feet. If you are using your orthotics in less-than-desirable shoes, then you will not get the maximum benefit from the orthoses. Tape your orthotics to your feet and try to walk across your cushy couch. That's how a soft, cushy shoe works with your orthotic to support your foot. So, be sure to use the right shoe for your feet and orthotics. If you are unsure what shoe you should be using, just ask. We'll be happy to advise you. Also, once your chief complaint has been completely resolved, you very well may be able to use other shoes or a less controlling orthotic every once in a while.

Places where you may be able to purchase the shoes include: New Balance in South Windsor/Avon, CT and JoesNewBalanceOutlet.com. Sam's in Hadley, MA and Brattleboro, VT; Marathon Sports. or Teds Boot Shop in Northampton, MA; Bootleggers in Greenfield, MA.

How To Pick Out Shoes Based On Your Quad

QUAD “A” Shoe Features:

- Neutral Cushion Shoe
- Neutral to Semi-Curved Last
- Lateral Heel Stabilizer

QUAD “C” Shoe Features:

- Neutral Cushion Shoe
- Lateral Forefoot Flare
- Stable Midfoot
- Straight Last

QUAD “E” Shoe Features:

- Mild Motion Control Shoe
- Stable Mid-foot
- Straight Last

QUAD “B” Shoe Features:

- Motion Control Shoe
- Straight Last
- Midfoot Control

QUAD “D” Shoe Features:

- Motion Control Shoe
- Medial Roll Bar
- Lateral Forefoot Flare
- Straight Last

QUAD “F” Shoe Features:

- Stability Shoe
- Medial Roll Bar
- Posted Heel
- Straight Last

“How long will my orthotics last?”

Depending on usage, they will last 3-5 years. They will need to be refurbished every 6-12 months depending on wear and tear. You can always make an appointment to have your orthotics evaluated. If you ever start having your old aches and pains again, it's probably a good bet that the orthotics need a tune-up.



“Why won't my health insurance co. pay for orthotics?”

Typically, the insurance companies will not pay for orthotics. It is always worth a try to ask them by submitting the orthotics' invoice and a letter of medical necessity to your insurance company. Maybe they will pay. We spend an amazing amount of time educating the health care world about the benefits of orthotics and how in the long term they may prevent more severe problems and thus more costly healthcare. Together, we can begin to change the way the healthcare industry works in regards to being more **proactive** and less reactionary.

“What should I bring with me to the clinic?”

- Bring or wear shorts and a t-shirt
- Your current selection of shoe gear.

“What if my orthotics need adjustments?”

This is fairly common. When we evaluate your feet on any given day, we are taking a snapshot of them for that time period. We note what needs to be corrected and build your orthotic accordingly. The goal of orthotics is to make your feet biomechanically sound, but what occasionally happens when we achieve this is that other problems may surface. Over the years of pounding our feet, our bodies make structural adjustments and some of these adjustments hide other underlying problems. For example, a limb length discrepancy is often seen once feet are in orthotics. This is because our bodies compensate for the discrepancy by collapsing our foot or rotating our hips, pelvis, or knees. Thus, your orthotic may need adjustment. Another thing to watch out for is that your foot or knee pain may go away after you have been wearing your orthotics, but you may develop hip or back pain. Again, come in so we can evaluate you to see if your orthotics need adjusting.

Since your orthoses are custom made, sometimes minor adjustments to them are required. Patients have 90 days after pick up, to have adjustments made free of charge from the lab, however you will occur an office visit that will require a co-payment. (Adjustments required after 90 days may be subject to an additional out of pocket expenses due to lab fees incurred.) Please do not wait for any adjustment evaluation you may need.

“In theory, if the foundations of a building deviated by the same proportional number of degrees as the ‘average’ foot, the building would neither stand straight nor be capable of supporting heavy loads. In addition, the human ‘foundations’ must be capable of balanced movement; therefore the average imperfections present in the ‘average’ foot become more increasingly significant.”

-D’Amico, Podopediatrics

Quad “A” Characteristics & Common Findings

Commonly thought of as an over-supinated or severe Pes Cavus foot.

High Arches - Ankle Instability - Rigid Feet - Poor Shock Attenuation

Quad “B” Characteristics & Common Findings

A mildly over-pronated foot type. It is often to be found unilateral and is often associated with a leg length discrepancy.

Low-Medium Arches - Toe-In Gait - HAV Deformity

Quad “C” Characteristics & Common Findings

Referred to as a subtle Pes Cavus foot or an under-pronator with an obvious toe-out gait pattern.

Medium/High Arches - Large Toe-Out Gait - Pinch Callus of Hallux - Thick skin on lateral foot border - Hip & Low Back Pain

Quad “D” Characteristics & Common Findings

A moderately over-pronated foot-type.

Low Arches - Minimal Toe Out - Midfoot Sag - Hallux Limitus

Quad “E” Characteristics & Common Findings

Often associated with a reverse-last foot shape.

Medium-Low Arches - Reverse Last Foot Shape - Medial Heel Whip - 5th Metatarsal Head Callus - Narrow Heel Base Gait

Quad “F” Characteristics & Common Findings

Commonly referred to as a Pes Plano Valgus foot deformity because of poor alignment to the floor. This is a true “flat foot.”

Flat Arches - Severe Instability - Central Forefoot Callus



Visit www.whatsmyfoottype.com to learn more about your foot type!

The clinic is held in our West Hatfield Office at 10 West St. This is the Danco Building on Route 5 & 10. You can get there by taking I-91 to Exit 21. If you are headed south on the highway, just take Exit 21 and bear right onto Route 5 & 10. We are about a quarter mile north of the exit. If you are headed north on I-91, take Exit 21 and turn left at the stop sign. Bear right onto Route 5 & 10, and we are about a quarter of a mile on the right as you go north. If you don't like the highway, you can get to us by traveling on Route 5 & 10. We are north of Northampton and south of Whately.

The orthoses cost \$550.00 (+ \$100.00 for administrative fees if we are billing your insurance – L3000 x 2). In addition, your insurance will be billed for the office visit & applicable casting fees of \$75.00 (A4580/29799). Your copayment will be collected at the time of your clinic visit & also when you pick up your new orthotics, as an office visit will be billed to your insurance at each visit. If your insurance has a deductible remaining, the cost of the orthotic/casting will be due at time of visit. \$300.00 is due when you schedule your clinic appointment. The remaining portion is due when the orthotics are picked up. For children under the age of 18, we have made special arrangements with Stride Orthotics to allow for a new pair of orthotics if/when the child outgrows his/her original pair. This reduced rate of \$395.00 is applicable up to and until the child's 18th birthday and does not apply to those patients whose insurance can be billed. Please note that once the 300.00 deposit has been paid, the clinic evaluation has been completed, and the orthotics are in fabrication, no refunds what-so-ever will be granted as several overhead costs have already been incurred. Due to the custom nature of the inserts, they are non-refundable.

Due to the high demand for our clinic and the number of professionals present, we have a \$50.00 no-show charge. If you will be unable to keep your appointment at the clinic, please call us and let us know prior to the date of the clinic.



Foot Tracings



Gait Evaluation



Static & Stance Evaluation



Measurements & Casting



Consultation & Advice



Footwear Education

The Gait Clinic Stations