

**NorthPointe Foot & Ankle**  
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## Product Feature

### Clearstat

Clearstat is an antimicrobial clear nail polish that prevents fungus, combats the yellow discoloration caused by fungus, and restores and maintains a healthy appearance to nails. You can use this product alone as a chip-resistant, clear nail polish or as a base coat under any colored polish, then easily remove with any standard nail polish remover.

For best results, file or buff nail surface before application to enhance absorption of antimicrobial ingredients, leaving nails strong and healthy with a protective, long-lasting shine. (This product is not intended to treat fungal nails.)



Ask your North Pointe doctor if Clearstat is right for you.

For this and other foot care products, visit our office or online store at: [www.MichiganFootCare.com](http://www.MichiganFootCare.com)



# NorthPointe News

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## Flat Feet & High Arches

Babies and toddlers appear to have flat feet when they are standing because their feet have fat pads. A slight arch may appear when the child sits or stands on tiptoes. Children are born this way; doctors refer to it as flexible flatfoot. Usually it's painless and doesn't interfere with a child's ability to walk or play sports. Most children outgrow it eventually as their feet get larger, their baby fat disappears and their foot muscles strengthen with weight-bearing activity such as walking.

### Signs and Symptoms

Although painless in young children, flatfeet in older children and adolescents can cause an aching pain. Sometimes the pain only occurs during or after sports or other physical activity. Sometimes the child complains that his/her foot, ankle, or leg is "tired"; and that he has aching pain at night. If the Achilles tendon (at the back of the ankle) is involved, it may become red and painful. Sometimes there are calluses under the sagging arches.

The tendency to have flatfeet runs in families, although there can be other causes as well. It can't be prevented.

Visit your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle podiatrist if your child complains of foot pain, if the ankle is red, the feet or ankles feel tired, or calluses are forming under the arches. Be sure to take your child's shoes along to your appointment so the doctor can examine the pattern of wear. Adolescents who still have flatfeet and complain of pain should also be evaluated by a doctor.

### Treatment

Treatment may include stretching exercises to lengthen the heel cord. Your podiatrist may also recommend shoe inserts called orthotics. These custom-molded arches made of composite materials provide support and relieve pain. Shoe inserts not only help people with flatfoot to walk comfortably, they also extend the life of their shoes, which otherwise would wear unevenly. In certain cases, physical therapy is recommended, and sometimes children are put in casts if the heel cords are too

tight. In a few cases where other treatments don't relieve pain, surgery is recommended.

### Heel Cord Stretch

Stand 3 feet from the wall with your feet pointed straight ahead. Lower your hips to the wall without raising your heels off the floor. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 3 to 6 times.



### High Arches

Just as feet with low arches can cause problems, so can feet with high arches, sometimes called cavus foot. A high arch is sometimes seen in children but may not be noticed until adulthood. As with flatfeet, high arches sometimes are hereditary. People with high arches are vulnerable to overuse injuries during sports and exercise because their feet aren't good shock absorbers. Not as much of the foot touches the ground to provide support for walking.

### Treatment

Custom-molded shoe inserts are prescribed for this condition. The inserts position the foot properly and provide shock absorption.



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# ORTHOTICS

An orthotic is a medical device used to support and align the foot and also serves to prevent or correct foot deformities. Orthotics cushion impact against hard surfaces and may be shock absorbing inserts. They also can relieve pressure by providing support behind a problem area such as a callous, a neuroma or a metatarsal head injury. Orthotics can provide support in cases of flat-foot or overpronation. They also can correct malalignment problems such as leg length inequality.

The three basic types of orthotic include:

- soft** – used for cushioning and padding (often temporary)
- semiflexible (permanent)** – preferred by athletes because they're more giving than rigid orthotics and less prone to blisters
- rigid** – often not tolerated by athletes

Orthotics may be made in the office from common materials, pre-fabricated or over-the-counter, or custom-made. Office made devices include felt pads, metatarsal pads and heel wedges. These may be made of viscoelastic, silicon, closed-cell rubber such as Spenco or closed-cell polyethylene. The differences are relative to durability and cushioning properties. Custom orthotics are used in circumstances where over-the-counter types will not work.



Many find that owning an additional pair of orthotics for dress or sport shoes is convenient. If you use orthotics and wish to own a second pair, ask your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle doctor about their savings program.

## Shoe Shopping

How often have you bought a new pair of shoes, sneakers or boots only to discover that after a day or two of wear, you have rubbing, chafing, blisters and/or pain in your toes, on a bunion, or in the heel? To help provide optimal protection for the skin/soft tissues of your feet, the Institute for Preventative Foot Health recommends following an integrated approach when purchasing footwear.

First, select padded socks that are made for the specific activity in which you will be involved—for example, padded socks made for walking, running or hiking. Be aware that some padded socks made of acrylic or acrylic-blend fibers have been demonstrated by scientific research to reduce impact, pressure and shear forces. They also move (“wick”) moisture away from the foot, making it less vulnerable to fungal infection, irritation and other skin damage.

Next, select shoes with non-slip outsoles that fit properly so that your foot can't move around in the shoe and become irritated. The shoes, like your padded socks, also should be made for the specific activity you will engage in. Properly designed and fitted shoes or boots have uppers made of mesh or another material that wicks away moisture while not allowing it in. If the shoe upper is made of leather, it should have vents or other openings that help evacuate moisture.



Well-designed footwear also has few seams or raised areas that can cause pressure points or rub the skin, and should be shaped like your feet (no pointy toes).

If you wear inserts or orthotics, be sure to bring them with you when you go shopping for new footwear.

## P.A.D. Testing

Commonly referred to as “poor circulation,” Peripheral Arterial Disease (P.A.D.) is the restriction of blood flow in the arteries of the leg. When arteries become narrowed by plaque (the accumulation of cholesterol and other materials on the walls of the arteries), the oxygen-rich blood flowing through the arteries cannot reach the legs and feet.

The presence of P.A.D. may be an indication of more widespread arterial disease in the body that can affect the brain, causing stroke, or the heart, causing a heart attack.

The test for P.A.D. is called the ankle-brachial index, a painless, non-invasive test that compares the blood pressure in the ankles with the blood pressure in the arms. Testing for P.A.D. is simple, painless and takes only 15 – 20 minutes.

Make an appointment today if you have any of these risk factors:

- Being over age 50
- Smoking (currently or previously)
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Personal or family history of P.A.D., heart disease, heart attack, or stroke
- Sedentary lifestyle (infrequent or no exercise)



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