

PLAN MEMBER

update

Claim Requirements for Custom Orthotics, Orthopedic Shoes, and Custom Shoes

Custom orthotics, orthopedic shoes, and custom orthopedic shoes are covered under your health benefit plan if they are medically necessary and prescribed to treat a diagnosed medical condition. Properly prescribed and constructed custom orthotics, orthopedic shoes, and custom shoes can reduce lower back, leg, and foot pain, and help you walk with greater comfort and support.

You are required to submit additional information to support your claims for both custom orthotics and orthopedic shoes (custom and off the shelf). You are also required to go to specific types of health care providers to get your prescription and to buy your shoes or inserts.

Some shoes and inserts are marketed as custom orthotics, orthopedic shoes, or custom orthopedic shoes but do not fall in line with the definition of “custom made” or “medically necessary” under your benefits plan and are therefore not eligible.

We want to ensure that your medically necessary custom orthotics, orthopedic shoes, and custom shoes are from qualified specialists, and that your footwear is properly constructed and fitted to treat your medical condition.

What to send with your claim...

Depending on your prescribed treatment, we will ask you to send us some supporting documentation along with your claim form:

What’s a custom orthotic?

A custom orthotic is a removable foot-care device worn inside a shoe and made from a three-dimensional (3-D) cast impression of your foot. It must be constructed from raw materials based on your individual specifications. Orthotics are intended to support, align, prevent and/or accommodate foot abnormalities and improve how the foot functions.

What are orthopedic shoes?

Footwear used to accommodate, control, or support the therapeutic needs of a foot deformity or abnormality in the leg, knee, or ankle. The footwear must be manufactured by recognized and reputable orthopedic footwear manufacturers and may be modified or adjusted to fit your feet.

What are custom shoes?

Custom footwear is prescribed and specially made for you if your needs cannot be accommodated by regular (or modified) orthopedic footwear due to the severity of your foot condition.

DOCUMENTATION	CUSTOM ORTHOTICS	ORTHOPEDIC SHOES	CUSTOM SHOES
A prescription from an eligible health care professional that includes the medical diagnosis requiring the orthotic/orthopedic shoe	Yes	Yes	Yes
A copy of the biomechanical examination or gait analysis	Yes	No	No
An itemized receipt indicating the date of pick up and that payment was made in full	Yes	Yes	Yes
The receipt must include the make and model of the orthopedic shoes	No	Yes	No
A description of the casting technique used to create the orthotic	Yes	No	No
A detailed lab invoice (see below for more details)	Yes	No	No

DOCUMENTATION	CUSTOM ORTHOTICS	ORTHOPEDIC SHOES	CUSTOM SHOES
An approved preauthorization form (available on the GSC website at greenshield.ca>Plan Members>How to Submit a Claim>Claim Submission Guidelines)	No	No	Yes

Choose the right provider

Only certain types of medical professionals have recognized expertise in the field of custom orthotics, orthopedic shoes and custom shoes; therefore, we have amended all plans to allow only the following providers:

For diagnosis and a prescription *of custom orthotics, orthopedic shoes, and/or custom shoes*

- Physician
- Podiatrist
- Chiropodist
- Nurse Practitioner

For the making and fitting of prescribed orthotics, orthopedic shoes, and/or custom shoes

- Podiatrist
- Chiropodist
- Pedorthist
- Orthotist
- Chiropractor

Claim submission requirements - in detail

Here is additional information about submitting a claim. You can find even more information (yes, there's more) and a glossary of terms in our FAQ document.

Claims for custom orthotics

Your custom orthotics must be prescribed as a medically necessary treatment for an eligible medical condition, and you must go to one of the three health care professionals listed above to get your diagnosis and prescription. You must also go to one of the five authorized providers listed above to buy your custom orthotics.

Along with your completed claim form, you will need to submit the following documents with your orthotic claim:

1. The prescription from an authorized health care professional – it must include the medical diagnosis for which you were prescribed the custom orthotic
2. An itemized receipt showing the date the orthotic was picked up and that payment was in full
3. A description of the casting technique used to create the orthotic
4. A copy of the biomechanical examination or gait analysis
5. A detailed lab invoice* showing:
 - Patient's name
 - Date of invoice or shipping date
 - Materials used to construct the orthotic (for onsite labs)
 - Invoice number
 - From (lab name) and To (clinic name/dispensing provider name)

*must be a lab invoice or proof of manufacturing, not the manufacturing process document

A handy claims submission checklist can be found here: [greenshield.ca>Plan Members>Benefits Dictionary>Extended Health Benefits](https://www.greenshield.ca/Plan-Members/Benefits-Dictionary/Extended-Health-Benefits). Be sure to bring it with you to review with your health care provider.

What's not covered under your benefits plan

The following items are not considered custom-made and therefore are not eligible under your plan:

- Stock items, off-the-shelf orthotics, and prefabricated devices such as cushioned heel cups or insoles
- Shoes purchased for comfort only (e.g., comfort shoes, walking shoes, running shoes)
- Shoes purchased for sports or recreational activities
- Orthotics made from walking over a pressure pad or plate, making a footprint on an inkpad, or using your shoe size to provide a prefabricated sole or insert

Here's what to avoid when buying your orthotics

- Your provider should be able to modify your orthotic. If they can't, it may indicate they don't have sufficient training to provide custom orthotics.
- Orthotics sold at temporary locations, such as home exhibits, trade or sports shows, short term kiosks, health booths at malls, or department stores
- Orthotics sold online
- Providers who hold mass screenings for multiple people at homes or workplaces
- Providers who offer to sell orthotics to your entire family without properly evaluating each family member individually
- Special discounts, e.g., "two for the price of one" deals or "free items with the purchase of an orthotic." Legitimate orthotic providers are not permitted to make such offers according to their code of ethics.

Children under the age of five: Please note that orthotic claims for children under the age of five are not eligible. That's because orthotics aren't commonly prescribed for children under five since they don't usually get skeletal or soft tissue injuries that require treatment with orthotics. Orthotics for children under the age of five may be prescribed in limited circumstances to treat some medical conditions (e.g., cerebral palsy). Please call our Customer Service Centre prior to purchasing orthotics for children under five to determine if the claim is eligible.

Claims for orthopedic shoes

Your orthopedic shoes must be prescribed as a medically necessary treatment for an eligible medical condition, and you must go to one of the three health care professionals listed above to get your diagnosis and prescription. You must also go to one of the five authorized providers listed above to have your orthopedic shoes fitted.

Along with your completed claim form, you will need to submit the following documents with your orthopedic shoe claim:

1. A prescription from an authorized health care professional – it must include the medical diagnosis for which you were prescribed the orthopedic shoe
2. A receipt showing that payment was made in full. The receipt should include the make and model of the orthopedic shoe

A handy claims submission checklist can be found here: [greenshield.ca>Plan Members>Benefits Dictionary>Extended Health Benefits](https://www.greenshield.ca/Plan-Members/Benefits-Dictionary/Extended-Health-Benefits). Be sure to bring it with you to review with your health care provider.

What's not covered under your benefits plan

Just like with custom orthotics, retailers and health care providers may sell shoes that are marketed as orthopedic, but are not manufactured by recognized orthopedic shoe manufacturers and are not prescribed to treat a diagnosed medical condition.

The following footwear does not meet orthopedic manufacturing criteria and are not eligible under your plan:

- Off-the-shelf, non-orthopedic footwear, such as walking shoes, sandals, comfort shoes, running shoes
- Shoes purchased for sports or recreational activities
- Hiking boots and work boots

Claims for custom shoes

You are required to go to one of the three health care professionals listed above to get your diagnosis and prescription for your custom footwear. You must also go to one of the five authorized providers listed above to have your custom footwear built as prescribed.

For custom footwear claims, a GSC pre-authorization form must be completed by your treating physician. In other words, your claim must be pre-approved by GSC before the claim will be accepted. Once you receive our approval, you will need to submit a receipt showing that the custom footwear was paid in full. This process is not new.

What's not covered under your benefits plan

Prefabricated orthopedic footwear or devices, even if modified or adjusted, are not eligible as a custom shoe claim as the shoes must be truly custom made for you from scratch using raw materials.

A handy claims submission checklist can be found here: [greenshield.ca>Plan Members>Benefits Dictionary>Extended Health Benefits](https://www.greenshield.ca/Plan-Members/Benefits-Dictionary/Extended-Health-Benefits). Be sure to bring it with you to review with your health care provider.

Questions?

Please call us at 1.888.711.1119 from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. (ET) Monday to Friday.

Custom Orthotics/Shoes FAQ and Glossary

What is GSC’s orthotics and orthopedic shoe policy?

- Only certain health professionals can prescribe and provide you with custom orthotics, orthopedic shoes, or custom shoes
- GSC now requires additional, specific information to support your claim for custom orthotics, orthopedic shoes, or custom shoes
- We will not accept orthotics claims for children under age five, except for specific medical conditions

Why does GSC have this policy?

- Orthotics and orthopedic shoe benefits are meant to provide coverage only for plan members diagnosed with specific medical conditions that affect their feet and who require specialized footwear to treat their condition and to assist with mobility
- We want to ensure that orthotics and orthopedic shoe claims are reimbursed only when they are truly medically necessary
- GSC constantly reviews our claims adjudication policies to ensure we are following industry best practice guidelines. The prescribers and providers considered eligible under our policy are licensed and governed by provincial and/or federal regulatory bodies. This means that they are subject to codes of conduct, meet minimum educational and continuing education standards, and are bound by standards of practice

What do I need to do?

This chart outlines the basic steps you need to follow to ensure your orthotics or orthopedic shoes are eligible under your plan.

	Orthotics	Orthopedic shoes	Custom shoes
BEFORE BUYING			
You’ll need a prescription from an eligible medical professional showing the medical diagnosis that requires the custom orthotic/shoes included on the prescription	✓	✓	✓
Get a prescription from an authorized prescriber: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physician • Podiatrist • Chiropractist • Nurse Practitioner 	✓	✓	✓
Claims for children under the age of five are ineligible	✓		
Get an approved pre-authorization form (available on the GSC website at greenshield.ca >Plan Members>How to Submit a Claim>Claim Submission Guidelines)			✓

	Orthotics	Orthopedic shoes	Custom shoes
WHEN BUYING			
You must go to an authorized provider to purchase your custom orthotics/shoes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podiatrist • Chiropodist • Pedorthist • Orthotist • Chiropractor 	✓	✓	✓
Get a biomechanical examination or gait analysis.	✓		
WHEN SUBMITTING YOUR CLAIM INCLUDE			
A completed General Claim Submission Form	✓	✓	
A completed preauthorization form			✓
An itemized receipt showing the date of pick up and that the payment was made in full	✓	✓	✓
The receipt must include the make and model of the orthopedic shoe		✓	
A description of the casting technique used to create the orthotic <i>Casting: a three-dimensional volumetric cast or mold of your foot is necessary to produce a truly custom-made orthotic. The provider makes the cast based on the contour and structure of your foot. Eligible casting techniques include foam box casting, plaster of Paris slipper casting, and laser screening.</i>	✓		
A copy of the biomechanical examination or gait analysis performed	✓		
Detailed lab invoice showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient's name • Date of invoice or shipping date • Materials used to construct the orthotic (for onsite labs) • Invoice number • From (lab name) and To (clinic name/dispensing provider name) 	✓		

What's not covered?

Orthotics:

- Stock items, off-the-shelf orthotics, and prefabricated devices such as cushioned heel cups or insoles
- Orthotics made from walking over a pressure pad or plate, making a footprint on an inkpad, or using your shoe size to provide a prefabricated sole or insert
- Orthotics purchased for comfort or sports/recreational activities
- Stock items
- Off-the-shelf and prefabricated models
- Soles or inserts

Orthopedic shoes:

- Off-the-shelf walking or sports shoes
- Sandals
- Shoes purchased for comfort only (e.g., comfort shoes, walking shoes, running shoes)
- Shoes purchased for sports or recreational activities
- Off-the-shelf, non-orthopedic footwear, such as walking shoes, sandals, comfort shoes, running shoes
- Hiking boots and work boots

Does this mean I have less coverage for custom orthotics/shoes under my benefit plan?

Not at all. GSC will reimburse eligible custom orthotics/shoe claims according to the provisions of your benefits plan.

In the past I have gone to my physiotherapist or medical supply store to get my custom orthotics/orthopedic shoes. Why doesn't GSC pay for these providers?

GSC conducted an extensive review of our custom orthotics/shoe policy and, based on best practices, updated our policy to ensure that only certain health care professionals provide custom orthotics/shoes. If you go to an authorized provider for your custom orthotics/shoes and provide the required documentation, we will review your claim.

Where can I find information about the policy?

Visit our website at [greenshield.ca](https://www.greenshield.ca)>Plan Members>Benefits Dictionary>Extended Health Benefits for all the information you need about our policy, including a checklist to take with you to your next appointment. The checklist will also assist you in submitting your claim to GSC. In addition, you can call a GSC customer service representative at 1.888.711.1119 from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. (ET) from Monday to Friday.

It's hard to remember all of the documentation required to submit a claim now. Is there a document that outlines what I need to know?

Yes. We've prepared this FAQ and a checklist to help you out. Please visit our website at [greenshield.ca>Plan Members>Benefits Dictionary>Extended Health Benefits](https://www.greenshield.ca/Plan-Members/Benefits-Dictionary/Extended-Health-Benefits).

How do I know that my health care practitioner has the right credentials for GSC to pay my claim?

Ask your health care practitioner whether they have any of the following designations:

- Physician
- Chiropodist
- Podorthist
- Podiatrist
- Orthotist
- Chiropractor
- Nurse practitioner

What is a custom orthotic?

An orthotic is a removable insert worn inside of a shoe that helps provide support and alignment for your feet and legs, accommodates any foot abnormalities, or improves how your foot functions. Orthotics are prescribed to treat diagnosed medical conditions, such as structural weaknesses or deformities in your feet or legs, and to aid in the treatment of traumatic injuries, overuse syndromes, and complications from diseases such as diabetes.

Once you receive your prescription for an orthotic, you must go to an authorized provider who will conduct an assessment of your condition. The orthotic is then custom made for you from scratch using raw materials based on a three-dimensional (3-D) cast made of your foot.

What's the process for getting a custom orthotic made?

Your health care professional will conduct a medical history assessment, a biomechanical examination, a gait analysis, and finally an orthotic evaluation – all of which are necessary for the orthotics provider to perform the task of building a custom orthotic especially for you.

Once your provider has determined the appropriate treatment for your specific condition, they will create a 3-D cast of your foot, which is specifically molded to the contours and shape of your foot. A proper 3-D cast is necessary to create a truly custom made orthotic. Casting techniques include foam box casting, plaster of paris slipper casting, contact digitizing, and laser screening.

Then the orthotic must be constructed from scratch, completely from raw materials, directly from the cast of your foot. You can usually pick up your custom-made orthotic a week after your assessment and casting. Your provider will have you try on the orthotic and will do another gait analysis with the orthotic inserted into your footwear – in case modifications or adjustments to the orthotic are necessary to ensure it fits properly.

Your provider will also talk to you about how to break in your orthotic, how long your orthotic is expected to last, as well as proper footwear fit and features.

When are orthotics prescribed?

Orthotics are prescribed to treat diagnosed medical conditions such as structural weaknesses or deformities, traumatic injuries, overuse, and complications from diseases such as diabetes.

How are orthotics dispensed?

If you are prescribed custom orthotics, you must go to a health care provider trained to assess, design, manufacture, and fit orthotics. Eligible providers are podiatrists, chiropodists, pedorthists, chiropractors, and orthotists.

Why don't children under the age of five qualify for orthotics?

According to the Pedorthic Association of Canada, orthotics are of very limited benefit for children under the age of five because many of the skeletal or soft tissue injuries that require treatment with custom-made orthotics do not occur until a person is older. GSC will not accept orthotics claims for children under the age of five, except for specific medical conditions. Please contact our Customer Service Centre prior to purchasing orthotics for children under five to see if they are eligible.

What documents are required to get my orthotic claim reviewed?

The following documents are required for GSC to review your orthotics claim:

1. A completed General Claim Submission Form (available on Plan Member Online Services)
2. A prescription from a physician, nurse practitioner, podiatrist, or chiropodist indicating your medical diagnosis
3. A copy of the biomechanical examination/gait analysis
4. A detailed lab invoice* showing:
 - Patient's name
 - Date of invoice or shipping date
 - Materials used to construct the orthotic (for onsite labs)
 - Invoice number
 - From (lab name) and To (clinic name/dispensing provider name)

*Must be a lab invoice or proof of manufacturing, not the manufacturing process document

Note that the orthotic must be dispensed by a podiatrist, chiropodist, pedorthist, chiropractor, or orthotist.

What are orthopedic shoes?

Orthopedic shoes are off-the-shelf, ready-made footwear manufactured by recognized and reputable orthopedic footwear manufacturers. Properly manufactured orthopedic shoes are used to accommodate, control, or support the therapeutic needs of a foot deformity or abnormality in the lower extremities. Orthopedic shoes can be prescribed to treat medical conditions such as bone deformities, neurological conditions such as multiple sclerosis, injury from an accident, or foot complications caused by diabetes. Manufactured orthopedic shoes may be modified to accommodate foot abnormalities, an orthotic, or other device; however, they're not the same as custom orthopedic shoes.

If you require an orthopedic shoe, it must be prescribed by an authorized health care professional and fitted by an authorized provider. The authorized provider will have the necessary expertise to assess your needs, select the best shoe, and ensure that it fits correctly.

Who can dispense orthopedic shoes?

If you are prescribed orthopedic shoes, you must go to an authorized provider trained to assess, design, modify, and fit orthopedic shoes. Eligible providers are podiatrists, chiropodists, pedorthists, chiropractors, and orthotists.

What documents are required to get my orthopedic shoe claim reviewed?

The following documents are required for GSC to review your claim:

1. A completed General Claim Submission Form (available on Plan Member Online Services)
2. A prescription from a physician, nurse practitioner, podiatrist, or chiropodist indicating the medical diagnosis
3. The orthopedic shoe must be dispensed by a podiatrist, chiropodist, pedorthist, chiropractor, or orthotist
4. A receipt indicating that payment was made in full and including the make and model of the orthopedic shoe

What are custom shoes?

Custom footwear is prescribed when the severity of your foot condition cannot be accommodated by regular or modified orthopedic footwear and you cannot function without custom footwear. Custom footwear may be prescribed for people who have structural deformities, traumatic injuries, or post-surgical amputations.

Who can dispense/manufacture custom shoes?

The construction of custom footwear requires a high degree of specialized expertise from the provider. Patients must go to an authorized provider who will assess their condition, create a unique cast of their feet, and have the custom footwear manufactured from scratch using raw materials. Eligible providers are podiatrists, chiropodists, pedorthists, chiropractors, and orthotists.

What documents are required to get my custom shoe claim reviewed?

The following documents are required in order for GSC to review your claim:

1. An approved pre-authorization form called the Authorization Form for Prosthetic Appliances and Durable Medical Equipment (available on the GSC website at [greenshield.ca>Plan Members>How to Submit a Claim>Claim Submission Guidelines](https://www.greenshield.ca/Plan-Members/How-to-Submit-a-Claim/Claim-Submission-Guidelines))
2. A completed General Claim Submission Form (available on Plan Member Online Services)
3. A prescription from a physician, nurse practitioner, podiatrist, or chiropodist indicating the medical diagnosis
4. The custom shoe must be dispensed by a podiatrist, chiropodist, pedorthist, chiropractor, or orthotist
5. A receipt indicating that payment was made in full

More questions?

Please call us at 1.888.711.1119 from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. (ET) Monday to Friday.

Glossary

Biomechanical examination: Your provider will complete a hands-on evaluation of your lower limbs including your foot structure, alignment, strength, and range of motion to identify any abnormalities.

Gait analysis: Your gait is simply the way you move when you walk. You will be asked to walk so that your provider can observe if there are any abnormalities in your gait that an orthotic could accommodate and/or correct.

Medical history: Your provider will ask you many questions to gather a thorough history of your medical condition, including your symptoms, previous injuries, lifestyle (occupation, activities, etc.), and the type of footwear you wear.

Orthotic evaluation: Based on your medical history, biomechanical examination, and gait analysis, your provider will determine treatment options and explain how the treatment will help with your specific needs.

Pre-authorization process: A form must be completed by your attending physician and prescribed treatment expense must be pre-approved by GSC prior to any claims being submitted for custom shoes. As custom orthopedic shoes are a high-cost item, it is important that you follow this process to determine exactly what will be covered by your benefit plan.

Podiatrist/Chiropodist: Podiatry or chiropody is a field of medicine that focuses on preventing, diagnosing, and treating conditions associated with the foot and ankle by medical, surgical or other means.

Orthotist: A certified orthotist is specifically trained and educated to design, fabricate and fit orthoses.

Pedorthist: A certified pedorthist is an orthotic and orthopaedic footwear expert trained in the assessment of lower limb anatomy and muscle and joint function.

Custom Orthotics, Orthopedic Shoes, and Custom Shoes CLAIM CHECKLIST

Before going to your provider, print this Claim Checklist and bring it with you to your appointment

CUSTOM ORTHOTICS	YES
Eligible Providers	
Did you go to an authorized health care professional to get your prescription? Must go to a physician, nurse practitioner, chiropodist, or podiatrist	
Did you go to an authorized provider to buy your custom orthotics? Must go to a podiatrist, chiropodist, pedorthist, chiropractor, or orthotist	
Required Claim Documentation	
General Claim Submission Form	
Prescription from an authorized health care professional.	
Does the prescription include the medical diagnosis for which you were prescribed the custom orthotic? If the prescription does not include a medical diagnosis or only describes your symptoms, your claim will not be accepted	
Itemized receipt showing the date the orthotic was picked up and that payment was made in full Can be obtained from your provider	
Detailed lab invoice* showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient's name • Date of invoice or shipping date • Materials used to construct the orthotic (for onsite labs) • Invoice number • From (lab name) and To (clinic name/dispensing provider name) *must be a lab invoice or proof of manufacturing, not the manufacturing process document Can be obtained from your provider	
Description of the casting technique used to create the orthotic <i>Casting: a three-dimensional volumetric cast or mold of your foot is necessary to produce a truly custom-made orthotic. The provider makes the cast based on the contour and structure of your foot. Eligible casting techniques include foam box casting, plaster of Paris casting, and laser screening.</i> Can be obtained from your provider	
Copy of the biomechanical examination or gait analysis Can be obtained from your provider You can submit either the biomechanical examination or the gait analysis	

ORTHOPEDIC SHOES	YES
Eligible Providers	
Did you go to an authorized health care professional to get your prescription? Must go to a physician, nurse practitioner, chiropodist, or podiatrist	
Did you go to an authorized provider to buy your orthopedic shoes? Must go to a podiatrist, chiropodist, pedorthist, chiropractor, or orthotist	
Required Claim Documentation	
General Claim Submission Form	
Prescription from an authorized health care professional	
Does the prescription include the medical diagnosis for which you were prescribed the orthopedic shoes? If the prescription does not include a medical diagnosis or only describes your symptoms, your claim will not be accepted	
Receipt indicating that payment was made in full. The receipt must include the make and model of the orthopedic shoe Can be obtained from your provider	

CUSTOM SHOES	YES
Eligible Providers	
Did you go to an authorized health care professional to get your prescription? Must go to a physician, nurse practitioner, chiropodist, or podiatrist	
Did you go to an authorized provider to buy your custom shoes? Must go to a podiatrist, chiropodist, pedorthist, chiropractor, or orthotist	
Required Claim Documentation	
Pre-Authorization Form	
Prescription from an authorized health care professional	
Receipt showing that the custom shoe was paid in full Can be obtained from your provider	