



# Pedorthic Terminology:

*A glossary of terminology prepared by the  
Pedorthic Association of Canada for  
Extended Health Benefits Providers and  
Third Party Agencies*

The terms and definitions in this document are provided as examples of the most common services offered by Pedorthists in Canada. Some members such as the Master Craftsmen (Custom shoe-makers) provide additional custom services specifically related to difficult footwear or other pedorthic problems. Any questions regarding the specific services a member may offer should be discussed directly with the individual member.

## **Pedorthic Designations**

Certified Pedorthic Master Craftsman - *The Master Craftsman is the highest level of certification available.*

A C Ped MC has been certified as a C Ped (C) and is also certified in the craft of *custom shoe design and manufacturing*.

Certified Pedorthist (Canada) - A C Ped(C) is an individual who is trained in the manufacturing, fitting and modification of foot appliances and footwear for the purposes of alleviating painful or debilitating conditions and providing assistance for abnormalities or limited actions of the lower limb.

Certified Pedorthic Technician (Canada) – The C Ped Tech (C) is an individual trained in the practice of shoe fitting footwear modifications and orthotic fabrication from files produced by health care professionals with the ability to assess, such as a C Ped (C) or C Ped MC. The C Ped Tech(C) may perform duties of a clinical pedorthist under the direct supervision of a C Ped (C) or C Ped MC

## **Allied Health Professions Designations**

Certified Orthotist – a designation awarded by the Canadian Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists. The function of a Certified Orthotist involves the design, fabrication and fitting of orthoses (braces or splints) intended to prevent or correct deformities, protect a painful part of the body or improve the function of a weakened extremity. This may include anything from custom fabricated arch supports to braces for the knee, back, shoulder or arm. ([www.oandp.com](http://www.oandp.com))

Chiropodist – (DCh or DPodM) an educational diploma granted in Canada by the Michener Institute, Chiropodists are a health regulated profession in Ontario. The practice of chiropody is the assessment of the foot and the treatment and prevention of diseases or disorders of the foot by therapeutic, orthotic and palliative means. ([www.ontariochiropodist.com](http://www.ontariochiropodist.com))

Podiatrist – (DPM) an American designation, Podiatrists are one of six primary care professions, authorized by Ontario Law to communicate their diagnosis to patients. Podiatrists are concerned with the examination, diagnosis and prevention of foot disorders by mechanical surgical and other means of treatment. ([www.opma.on.ca](http://www.opma.on.ca))

## **Basic Terminology**

Custom Made – a device that is manufactured from raw materials. In the case of a custom foot orthotic or custom made footwear, the term custom made can only be used when a three dimensional image of the foot is used to capture bony alignment and shape, and the device is manufactured from raw materials.

Custom Molded (non-casted) – a device molded directly to the foot from raw materials that are warmed until soft. This device can be further modified and used to provide cushioning, pressure relief, redistribute load and accommodate deformity (a self-molded product is not considered custom molded).

Customized – a pre-fabricated/over-the-counter device that has been modified by the addition or deletion of material in order to modify movement or accommodate pain or dysfunction.

## **Services Provided**

Pedorthic Assessment – the assessment of lower limb bony alignment, movement pattern, general function of the foot, and the interaction of the foot with the rest of the body. Typically a Pedorthic Assessment includes a history taking, bony palpation, range of motion testing, gait analysis, and footwear consultation.

Gait Analysis – the observation of the lower extremity to determine deviations in alignment, movement pattern and symmetry. This may be done visually or through video recording.

Custom Foot Orthoses (Orthotics) – an internal foot appliance which is manufactured from a three dimensional image of the foot, and made from raw materials. A Custom Foot Orthosis can accommodate bony deformities, and/or modify the movement pattern of the foot and lower limb.

Custom Made Footwear – footwear that is manufactured from a three dimensional image of the foot and lower leg, and made of raw materials. Custom made footwear is specifically designed for each and every individual. It is usually needed when stock footwear will not fit due to deformity, or will not suit the client due to significant dysfunction. The footwear may be functional or accommodative.

Footwear Modification/Customized Footwear – the adaptation of stock footwear to accommodate deformity and/or improve function of the foot and lower limb. For ease of use, the term shoe will be used, although most of the modifications can be done to shoes, boots, and sandals. A diagram of footwear anatomy has been included on the last page for your convenience.

Sole Lift – permanent, external modification of the midsole and outsole to add a prescribed amount of height to one or both shoes.

Flare – permanent, external modification to the midsole and outsole to widen the base of support on the inside (medial) or outside (lateral) portion of the shoe.

Buttress – permanent, external modification to the midsole, outsole and the upper, to bolster the support available through the midfoot.

Rocker Sole – permanent, external modification to the midsole and outsole in which material is added and the flex point of the shoe is modified to allow improved function, or protection of the foot and ankle.

External Metatarsal Bar – permanent, external modification to the midsole in which a “bar” of material is added beneath the ball of the foot to change the flex point of the shoe. Similar to a Rocker Sole but with less adjustability and specificity of treatment.

Internal Metatarsal Support (Pad) – permanent, internal modification by the addition of a mound of material added to the area of the shoe just proximal to the ball of the foot to support the transverse (metatarsal) arch.

Balloon Patch – permanent, external modification to the upper of the shoe by addition of material to accommodate a bony prominence such as a bunion, hammer toe, etc. This is not the same as point stretching.

Closure Modification – permanent, external modification of the upper of the shoe by the addition of leather and fabric. Examples include the addition of Hook & Loop (Velcro) straps, buckles, or a closure system including both hook & loop and lacing (Lace Stitch Velcro). This modification allows the use of footwear by an individual not able to use the original closure due to bony deformity of the foot or dysfunction of the hands, back, hips or knees.

Scaphoid Pad (Arch Cookie) – permanent, internal modification by the addition of padding to the medial longitudinal arch of a shoe. Typically used for children, or individuals requiring a lifting of the inside arch of the foot when a custom made orthoses is not feasible.

Posting (Wedging) – permanent or temporary, internal modification of a shoe or insole by the addition of “wedges” or “shims” to modify the angle of the rearfoot (heel) and/or forefoot (ball). Often used as a pre-orthotic trial to determine efficacy of corrective treatment.

Internal Heel Lift – non-permanent, internal modification by addition of a specific height to address a minor, or portion of a major leg length discrepancy. Used as a pair, internal heel lifts are also useful in the treatment of Achilles tendonitis and Sever’s Disease as well as issues of footwear fit.

SACH Heel (Solid Ankle Cushion Heel) – permanent, external modification by addition of a softer durometer (compressible) material replacing a portion of the back heel base. SACH heels reduce shock at heel strike and compensates for diminished of ankle motion.

Shuffle plate – permanent, external modification by addition of a smoother, more slippery material to the forefoot of a client’s shoe. Useful when the client is unable to fully lift the forefoot, specifically when walking in a carpeted environment.

Thomas Heel - an anterior medial extension longer than the standard heel to add rearfoot or midfoot support medially.

Sole Bar – A steel or carbon fibre, full-length bar, laminated between the sole to eliminate dorsiflexion.

Custom Made Toe Splint – a device manufactured from a raw material (typically a silicon-like material) designed to re-align, separate or support a deformed or deviated toe or toes.

### **Over-the-Counter Products**

OTC (Over-the-Counter) Footbed (insole) – a prefabricated insole that can be modified with the addition of posting, padding, or metatarsal support. May also be further modified by the addition of specific top covers to address conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, or significant callus build up.

Fitting Aids – the addition of off the shelf, or hand made padding, cushioning or fillers designed to improve the fit of a client's footwear. Useful when there is a significant size discrepancy between feet, or abnormally shaped anatomy not requiring custom made footwear or footwear modifications.

Orthopaedic Footwear – footwear that meets all twelve criteria outlined by the Pedorthic Association of Canada Guidelines for Orthopaedic and Therapeutic Footwear. (See Appendix 2)

Therapeutic Footwear – footwear that meets ten of the twelve criteria outlined by the Pedorthic Association of Canada Guidelines for Orthopaedic and Therapeutic Footwear. (See Appendix 2)

### **Specialty Footwear/Braces/Splints**

Overboot – footwear designed to cover shoes, boots and sandals to protect them from the elements; may also include insulating properties. These products allow the client to continue their use of specific footwear and orthotic devices during inclement weather.

Post-op shoe(s) – footwear designed to accommodate swelling, dressings and possible hardware present following an operative procedure. Typically sold as a single shoe, post-op shoes may also be used as a pair following bilateral surgery. May also be used to help establish equal heel heights when regular footwear cannot be worn.

Forefoot Relief Shoe – single footwear device which decreases or eliminates external pressure to the plantar surface of the forefoot. Useful as a post-operative choice following forefoot surgery or as a device to protect an ulcerated area of the forefoot.

Rearfoot Relief Shoe - single footwear device which decreases or eliminates external pressure to the plantar surface of the rearfoot. Useful as a post-operative choice following rearfoot surgery or as a device to protect an ulcerated area of the rearfoot.

Plantar Fasciitis (Dorsiflexion) Night Splint – off the shelf brace, fit for the client and designed to maintain the forefoot in a dorsiflexed position during sleeping. It is useful in treatment of plantar fasciitis, Achilles tendonitis, and a number of other diagnoses involving the range of motion of the ankle. Can also be custom made as per prescription.

Toe Alignment Splint – off the shelf device designed to re-align the great and lesser toes. Useful in treatment of flexible deformities of the toes such as hammer toes, mallet toes, claw toes, bunions, and over-crossing toes.

Arch Brace – off the shelf device designed to support the medial longitudinal arch of the foot. Often used to replace taping or strapping. It can be useful for clients not needing custom made devices, or unable to wear footwear for specific activities.

Toe Splints/Pads/Cushions – off the shelf devices designed to cushion, align or accommodate bony deformities. These items are often used to stave off surgical intervention.

Rocker-Soled Walking Brace – Available with 2 or 4 air chambers, an over-the-counter walking brace. Used to treat ankle and foot disorders/injuries for a short-term period up to one year.

### **Stockings, Hosiery and Specialty Socks**

Medical Compression Stockings – The basic treatment for chronic venous insufficiency and lymphedema. Treatment of venous problems depends on the severity of the condition. The greater the severity, the higher the prescribed compression. Compression is graduated, strongest at the ankle with decreasing compression up the leg. This design compresses dilated veins to help move blood up the legs and back to the heart. If swelling of the foot and lower leg is not controlled, the fit of a shoe is compromised and could lead to additional complications.

Seamless socks – hosiery that contains no seams exposed to the skin. Often prescribed and used by individuals with Diabetes, various forms of Arthritis, and dermatological conditions.

Gel socks – hosiery containing a layer of silicon-like material on the bottom side. Often prescribed and used by individuals with Diabetes, various forms of Arthritis, and fat pad degeneration.