

# Rehabilitation Exercises whilst wearing an offloading boot or shoe

Podiatry Service



In podiatry, offloading is a medical term that refers to reducing pressure to areas of the foot to reduce pain and “trauma” to those areas. We have given you a shoe or boot help reduce the pressure on your ulcer.

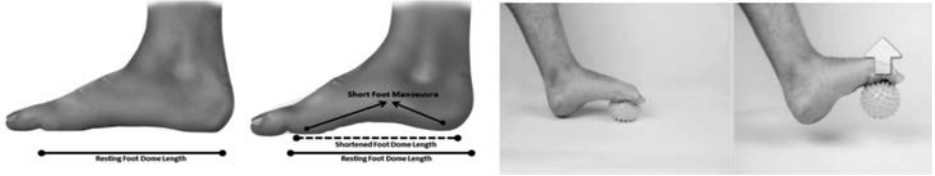
Long term use of an offloading boot or shoe, whilst necessary to help with the healing of the ulcer, can lead to weakness in other things like muscles and bones. We have to make sure we look after the other foot and leg as it may be under more stress than normal while you are wearing the boot or shoe. It is important that you still move about and this leaflet will give you some information about exercises that you can do safely.

## **Why should I exercise?**

Patients with foot ulcers are often worried about weight bearing (putting weight on the foot) because they think that it might make things worse. While this is true to an extent, studies suggest that, if your podiatrist agrees you can safely carry out non-weight bearing exercises.

If you are not physically active, it can increase the risk of health problems like diabetes and heart disease, as well as increasing the risk of falls, so it is important to keep moving as much as you can - but safely – and walking is a great way to do this. Below are some exercises that might help with this. They may not all apply to you so your podiatrist will go through with you which ones may be helpful, allowing you to ask questions about anything that you are worried about. Please note that some minor discomfort is to be expected when doing these exercises but your podiatrist can discuss this with you during your appointment.

# Examples of some exercises that might be useful For the small muscles in the feet



## For the muscles on the outside of the foot or leg



## For the muscles on the inside of the foot or ankle



## For the muscles on the front of your foot or ankle



## Stretch for the back of your leg.



## Exercise for balance



**If you are experiencing any discomfort doing these, please stop doing them and speak to your podiatrist at your next appointment.**