



## **QUICK TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CUSTOM SHOES**

Fitting custom molded shoes is a very detailed process. In addition, patients can often be emotionally sensitive. In order to minimize the potential for problems, the following are some tips to help ensure that you consistently obtain the desired results.

### **THE CAST:**

- Taking a good cast is the single most important step in making a shoe. *Do not rush this step.* It is best to use a foam covered casting board.
- The goal is to make sure the cast represents the true size and shape of the **weight-bearing** foot. This includes allowing for edema (more prevalent later in the day), raised toes, bunions, significant toe extensions, etc....
- Tell the patient not to contract their feet during casting; that you are trying to capture the true width and length.
- If you are using fiberglass splints, be aware that this is the least accurate casting method. Be careful not to over tighten the wrap at the metatarsals, or at the toes.
- Take tracings of the **weight-bearing** feet on separate sheets of paper. If the patient has existing well fitting shoes, trace the outline of these insoles also.

### **THE SHOES:**

- Choose the shoe (Low top/Chukka/High top) based on the patient's pedorthic needs. See what they currently wear and whether or not it is working for them.
- Low top shoes will look lighter, dressier and less orthopedic. Chukkas and High tops will provide more control and stability. Sandals, clogs, etc... are discouraged and seldom used as they provide little support.
- Molded shoe features such as extra depth insoles, wedge soles, surgical openings, etc... will be more comfortable and functional for the patient to wear, but they do not look fashionable.

### **THE PATIENT:**

- Patient management is of the utmost importance. They need to know that you are designing the shoes to resolve a specific condition (not enhance their wardrobe!).
- Be careful to not oversell the shoes in terms of function or cosmetics. Patients can build up unrealistic expectations. It is good to show them some pictures of molded shoes beforehand, or even a sample. Send photographs of their existing shoes to the lab if possible.
- Explain to the patient how the shoe will look, and why, before you cast and as you are fitting the shoe.
- Be confident when dispensing the shoe. If the shoe appears to be too tight or too loose on the first fitting, there should be no cause for concern. Molded shoes are designed to be easily modified if required.

Custom molded shoes are intended for that segment of the population that cannot get proper fit or function from extra depth shoes. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us. Our goal is to provide you with trouble free patient care solutions.