

{ WHAT IS DROP FOOT & WHAT ARE SOME OF ITS SYMPTOMS? }

WHAT ARE MY ORTHOTIC OPTIONS TO HELP ME GET BACK ON MY FEET AFTER ACQUIRING DROP FOOT?

Drop foot is a general term for difficulty lifting the front part of the foot. If you have drop foot, you may drag the front of your foot on the ground when you walk. Drop foot isn't a disease. Rather, drop foot is a sign of an underlying neurological, muscular or anatomical problem. Sometimes drop foot is temporary and in other cases, drop foot is permanent. If you have drop foot, you may need to wear a brace on your ankle and foot to hold your foot in a normal position while walking. Without a brace, many people substantially increase the risk of catching their toe and falling while walking.

WHAT CAUSES DROP FOOT?

The most common cause of drop foot is compression of the nerve that controls the muscles involved in lifting the foot. This can happen at the knee or in the lower spine due to an acute injury or during hip, spine or knee surgery. Long-term nerve damage associated with diabetes can also cause foot drop. Other disorders, such as polio, muscular dystrophy, Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease and disorders that affect the spinal cord or brain such as ALS, multiple sclerosis or CVA (stroke) may cause drop foot.

WHAT IS AN AFO?

The term "AFO" is an acronym for ankle foot orthosis. It is an external brace worn to aid in the function of the foot and ankle to increase balance. In the case of drop foot, the main goal is to lift the foot up during walking to prevent a fall and achieve a more normal walking pattern. Depending on the diagnoses, the braces can be custom made from a thermoplastic, or in some cases, a lightweight carbon fiber brace will be used. In certain cases, electrical stimulation devices such as WalkAide and Bioness can be used to lift the foot and aid during walking for a non-brace option. AFO's are covered by most insurance plans.

If you, or someone you know is suffering from drop foot, call Achilles and see how we can help you reach your goals!



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