

## Foot Drop with Motor Neurone Disease (MND)

Foot drop happens when the muscles that normally lift the foot (dorsiflex) become weak and are no longer able to lift the foot.

This may impact on your walking by making it less efficient and less safe. If you cannot safely clear the ground with your foot when you are walking, you are at risk of tripping over objects or over your own foot.

Sometimes people compensate by bending their knee more or hitching their hip or swing the leg out to the side. These compensations make gait less efficient and may lead to discomfort in in your hip or knee.

Without careful intervention you may end up with reduced walking confidence. A Physiotherapist will help you to stay as mobile as possible for as long as possible by looking at a combination of:

- **Exercise** techniques to optimise working muscles and balance
- **Stretches** to ensure maintenance of functional range of movement
- **Trial of ankle foot orthoses with prescription if appropriate.**

### Ankle Foot Orthoses

- Help to keep to foot up, working with the weakened muscles to clear the ground with your foot.
- Support the ankle joint where the weakened muscles are no longer able to do this. This in turn can improve your balance, minimize the risk of joint damage, and reduce the risk of falling.

There are many types of ankle foot orthoses on the market. Due to the progression of MND, it is usually the best option to trial off the shelf options first. However, if a suitable option is not found referral can be made to an Orthotist to look at custom made options.



The best option may change as your MND progresses, so regular reviews are advisable.

**If you would like to consult with our Motor Neurone Disease-specific Physiotherapist, please call 1800 777 175.**