

Podiatry and foot care supports

Quick summary: Podiatry and foot care supports are supports to help you treat and manage conditions that affect your feet, ankles and legs. The Australian health system may provide podiatry and foot care supports. We can only fund these supports if they're related to your disability.

We may fund podiatry and foot care supports if you need them because of the things you can and can't do because of your disability. And they help you undertake activities of daily living. These supports might include specialised shoes or funding to treat your foot problems. Podiatry and foot care are especially important if you have a disability that affects sensation to your feet.

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What do we mean by podiatry and foot care supports?

Podiatry and foot care supports are what we call disability-related health supports. We can only fund these supports if they directly relate to your disability and help you undertake activities involved in day-to-day life.¹ Learn more about [what we mean by disability-related health supports](#).

Podiatry and foot care supports are supports that help you manage conditions that affect your feet, ankles and legs. Podiatry and foot care supports can include things like the assessment and development of a podiatry care plan. This care plan will describe how to care for your feet, or foot orthotics to help you move. Foot orthotics are specialised shoe inserts that support your feet and posture.

If you need podiatry and foot care supports, you should talk to your doctor first. They can link you to health services that are paid for through Medicare. You can continue to access health services from Medicare, even when you are a NDIS participant. Learn more about the [help you can get through the health system or other services](#).

Your disability might mean you can't manage your foot care on your own. In this case, we may include funding for a podiatrist to help you manage your foot care. Foot care may include cutting your toenails to prevent foot problems.

Podiatry and foot care supports could also include funding for a support worker to help you manage your foot care. For example, helping you use specific shoe supports or to help you with foot exercises.

What help can you get to manage foot care through the health system or other services?

Government and community services must make sure all Australians, including people with disability, have access to their supports. We call these supports mainstream and community supports. The NDIS was set up to work alongside government and community services, not replace them. Learn more about [Mainstream and community supports](#)

What help can you get through Medicare?

Medicare helps all Australians with the costs of their health care. You may be able to get podiatry and foot care supports from Medicare, or another system. For example, you can get podiatry and foot care supports through Medicare if you have a Chronic Health Management Plan.

The NDIS can't fund a support if it's most appropriately funded or provided by one of these other services. The NDIS may only fund supports that relate to your disability² and meet the [NDIS funding criteria](#).

How do we decide what podiatry and foot care supports we fund?

All NDIS funded supports must meet the [NDIS funding criteria](#).

Podiatry and foot care supports are one of the disability-related health supports we may fund.

Generally, we can fund podiatry and foot care supports for you if you need them ongoing and they're related to your disability. We'll need evidence to support this, such as reports or assessments from a qualified health professional.

Learn more about [how we decide what disability related health supports we may fund](#).

Read examples about podiatry and foot care supports we may fund in our [specialised footwear – Would we fund it guide](#).

What types of podiatry and foot care supports do we fund?

What if you need a podiatrist to help with your foot care?

Sometimes, you might need a podiatrist to help manage your foot care needs. Podiatrists can develop a podiatry care plan that will outline how you or someone else can help you manage your foot care.

The podiatry supports we can fund may include:

- an initial consultation and assessment by a podiatrist
- the development of a podiatry care plan
- foot care, such as toenail cutting or callus removal to prevent foot-related problems
- regular re-assessment during your care plan
- a detailed assessment at the end of your care plan, to make sure your next plan includes the right amount of support.

What if you need assistive technology?

You may need equipment to help protect your feet, so that you don't need as much regular foot care. We call this assistive technology. Assistive technology to help manage your foot care needs may include things like:

- orthoses such as a brace or splint
- custom made orthoses
- medical grade footwear. These are shoes which have been modified to include special features like heel lifts, rocker bottom soles, toe skates or flared soles to accommodate the wearing of braces and callipers.
- custom footwear, for example, to accommodate the wearing of splints or braces
- maintenance and repair of your podiatry related assistive technology.

We may fund assistive technology if you can give us evidence that:

- the assistive technology will reduce your need for other supports – for example, less need for a support worker or podiatrist³
- you'll be able to do more things on your own, for example, using specialised shoes will help you go shopping, visit friends or go to school or work⁴
- other mainstream health services don't fund the assistive technology and you need the support directly because of your disability.⁵

You'll need to give us evidence from a podiatrist or other appropriately qualified professional that you need the support. We'll use the evidence to work out if the support meets the [NDIS funding criteria](#).

Learn more about [Assistive technology](#).

What if you need help to manage your podiatry and foot care support needs?

You might be able to manage your podiatry and foot care needs by yourself. Or, you may need help to manage your podiatry and foot care. If you don't have family or friends that can help, we may fund a support worker to help you. For example, to help you use your foot supports or to help you with foot exercises.

There are some tasks that a support worker can't help you with. For example, cutting your toenails or removing calluses. We may include funding for a podiatrist to help you with these. We can only fund these supports if they relate to the things you can't do because of your disability.

How do you get podiatry and foot care supports in your plan?

Do you need to provide us with evidence?

Yes. Talk to your local area coordinator, early childhood partner or planner to work out what evidence we need to fund your podiatry and foot care supports.

If you have a podiatry care plan, we may ask for a copy. We'll also ask for any other assessments or reports about your foot care supports.

During your planning meeting, we'll ask you, your family, or carers to explain how your disability affects your ability to manage your podiatry and foot care.

We'll ask you what podiatry and foot care supports you currently get. We'll ask who you get your supports from, and how often you get them. We'll also ask what supports you might need but don't have yet.

We'll use this information to decide if the podiatry and foot care supports you need, meet the [NDIS funding criteria](#). If they do, we'll work out the amount of funding for podiatry and foot care supports to include in your plan.

What if you don't agree with our decision?

If we decide podiatry and foot care supports don't meet our [NDIS funding criteria](#), we can't include them in your plan.

We'll give you written reasons why we made the decision.⁶ You can [contact us](#) if you'd like more detail about the reasons for our decision.

If you don't agree with a decision we make about your request for podiatry and foot care supports, you can ask for an internal review of our decision.⁷ You'll need to ask for an internal review within 3 months of getting your plan.⁸ Learn more about [reviewing our decisions](#).

What happens after you have podiatry and foot care supports in your plan?

Once you have podiatry and foot care support funding in your plan, you can use it to get the podiatry and foot care supports you need. Your local area coordinator, early childhood partner or planner will describe how you can use the funding in your plan comments. The comments will be next to the funding budget in your plan.

If you need help to use the funding, talk to your local area coordinator, early childhood partner or planner, or your support coordinator.

Learn more in [Our Guideline – Your plan](#) or the general [Your plan webpage](#).

You can also go to [what happens once you have disability-related health support funding in your plan](#).

Reference List

¹ NDIS (Supports for Participants) Rules r 7.4.

² Section 34(f), NDIS Act 2013.

³ Section 34(c), NDIS Act 2013.

⁴ Section 34(a), NDIS Act 2013.

⁵ Section 34 (f), NDIS Act 2013.

⁶ NDIS Act s100(1).

⁷ NDIS Act s100

⁸ NDIS Act s 100(2)