Podiatry plays an important role in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. Rheumatoid arthritis affects the smaller joints such as fingers and toes first so feet are often one of the first places to be affected. There are many things a podiatrist can do to make walking less painful:

**Orthoses**
These are a special type of insole that can be fitted into your shoes. They will help you walk in such a way to minimise the pressure on your affected joints.

**Shoes**
As well as a moulded insole, your podiatrist will advise you on finding shoes that are roomy enough to accommodate your foot-and orthoses- without adding unnecessary pressure. If your toes are beginning to stiffen or curl, for example, it’s important for you to wear a shoe with an extra deep toe box. In some cases it may be necessary to refer you to an orthotist, so a shoe can be tailored to your exact foot shape.

**Secondary problems**
Any secondary problems such as ulcers or corns that have been caused by foot deformities or shoes can also be treated.

**Clinics**
Foot clinics are held in several localities and you would be sent to the nearest to your home or work address. Some specialised clinics are held at the QE11, Hertford County and Baldock.

**How do I make an appointment**
Anyone can apply to our service-you simply need to complete and return our application form. Also the rheumatology nurses can refer you. Application forms are available from your local community centre or by contacting our department (see contact details below)

**What will happen when you receive my application**
You will be sent a letter asking you to contact our department to arrange a mutually convenient appointment. The appointment is usually within 6-8 weeks

**What will happen at my first appointment**
At your first appointment we will ask you some background information we will need to decide how to treat your feet.
The Podiatrist will check your feet and together decide on a treatment plan. As part of this plan the podiatrist may decide that you need further tests or investigations by other specialist podiatrists
For more information or to receive an application form please contact: Department of Podiatry and Foot Health 2B Brocket Rd
Hoddesdon
Herts EN11 3BZ

Tel: 01992 445265