

Foot biomechanics in diabetes and off loading strategies

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<https://twitter.com/ProfChrisNester>

Funding & Colleagues & Declarations

SSHOES

Special Shoes Movement

NMP-2008-SME-2-R.229261



SMARTPIF

SMART TOOLS for the Prescription of INSOLES and FOOTWEAR

SME GA n. 312573



Declaration:

Nester and University of Salford have a commercial interest in an orthotics company (Salfordinsole) that was a partner in **SMARTPIF** project



IWGDF Guidance on footwear and offloading interventions to prevent and heal foot ulcers in patients with diabetes

Prepared by the IWGDF Working Group on Footwear and Offloading

Recommendations

Introduction

Casting and prefabricated healing devices

Therapeutic footwear

Surgical offloading interventions

Other offloading interventions

Key controversies

References

Glossary

Systematic review

Casting and prefabricated healing devices

Are casting or prefabricated offloading effective techniques to heal plantar foot ulcers in patients with diabetes?

Recommendation 1:

To heal a neuropathic plantar forefoot ulcer without ischemia or uncontrolled infection in a patient with diabetes, offload with a non-removable knee-high device with an appropriate foot-device interface.
(GRADE recommendation: strong, Quality of evidence: high)

Rationale 1:

Two high-quality systematic reviews and meta-analyses of randomized and non-randomized controlled trials indicate that the use of non-removable offloading devices (both TCC and walkers rendered irremovable) results in a significantly higher proportion of healed diabetic neuropathic plantar forefoot ulcers when compared to removable off-loading devices (including both walkers and footwear).^{12,13} A Cochrane systematic review and meta-analysis included five RCTs¹⁴⁻¹⁶ with a cumulative total of 230 patients and found a relative risk ratio of 1.17 (95%CI 1.01-1.36; p=0.04) for non-removable offloading to achieve healing compared to removable offloading.¹² Another systematic review and meta-analysis included 10 randomized and non-randomized clinical studies with a cumulative total of 524 patients^{14-16,18-24} and showed a significantly higher relative risk ratio of 1.43 (95%CI 1.11-1.84, p=0.001) for non-removable offloading to achieve healing compared to removable offloading.¹³ Based on two, relatively small RCTs,^{17,25} there is evidence to suggest that a removable walker rendered irremovable is as effective as a TCC in healing neuropathic plantar forefoot ulcers (RR=1.06; 95%CI 0.88-1.27; p=0.31).¹³ Therefore, there is no particular preference for a TCC or prefabricated non-removable knee-high device to heal plantar foot ulcers, as long as an appropriate foot device interface is maintained. We conclude that the quality of evidence is high.

Possible adverse effects of non-removable knee-high devices include ankle joint immobilization, reduced activity level, potential risk of falls, knee or hip complaints due to asymmetry in walking from the unilaterally increased sole height, and pressure ulcers due to poor casting or fitting.^{15,26,27} Nevertheless, we consider the benefits of effective and expedited healing to outweigh such potential harm. Many patients may prefer not to use a non-removable knee-high device as it limits them in their daily life, for example with sleeping, bathing, or driving a



Objective

- Example off loading strategies (there are others!)
- Biomechanics led design (evidence led design)
- Focus on getting optimised solutions for individual patients (targeted)

++ Focus on prevention

Assumption

“there is something different about the foot of each patient that I need to understand and use to build my orthotic prescription, if I don’t it will affect the outcome”.



Assumption

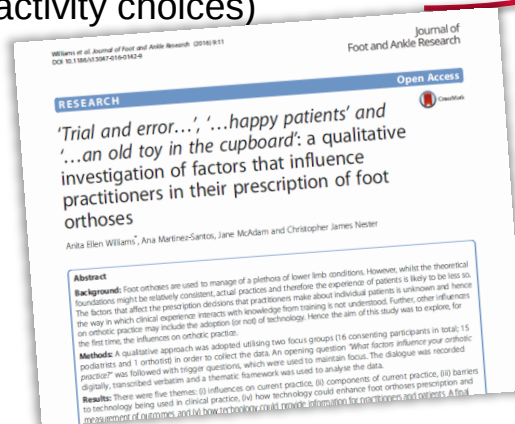
“there is something different about the foot of each patient that I need to understand and use to build my orthotic prescription, if I don’t it will affect the outcome”.

- ✓ **FOOT SHAPE** (foot type or deformity)
- ✓ **TISSUE** (thickness, stiffness, position, quality)
- ✓ **ACTIVITY** (low or high levels)
- ✓ **MOBILITY** (stiff to compliant foot)
- ✓ **FOOTWEAR** (activity choices)

Integrate with
experience

Set objectives for the
orthotic (or footwear)

identify orthotic design features (shapes,
materials) that might meet these
objectives...but it is **“trial and error”**

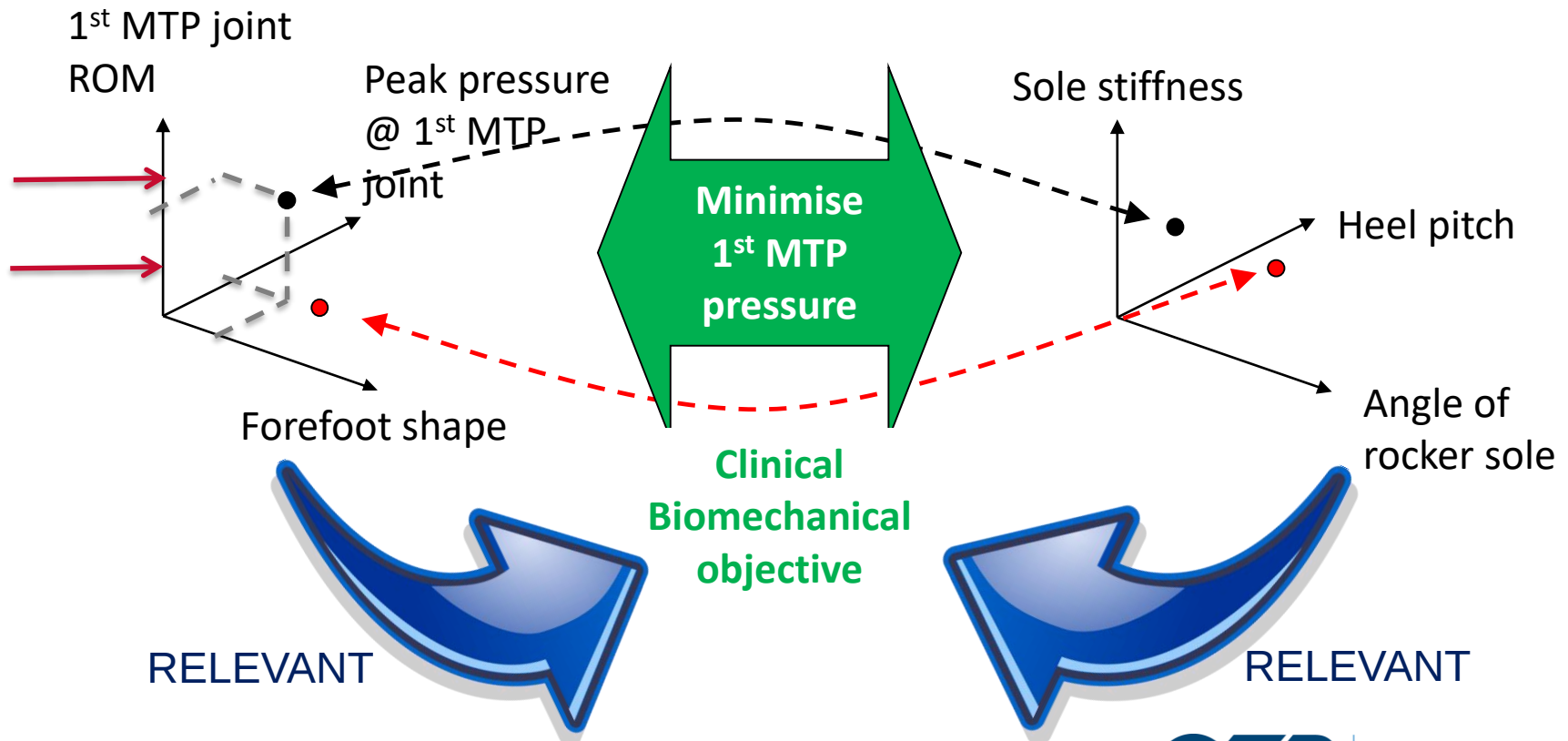


Foot biomechanical characteristics
(measured or estimated/guessed)

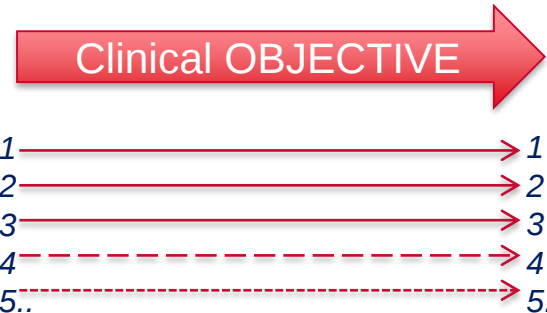
Clinical OBJECTIVE

Orthotic/Footwear Design Parameters
(i.e. prescription)

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 1 | → | 1 |
| 2 | → | 2 |
| 3 | → | 3 |
| 4 | → | 4 |
| 5.. | → | 5.. |



**Foot biomechanical
characteristics**
(measured or
estimated/guessed)



**Orthotic/Footwear
Design Parameters**
(i.e. prescription)

For a given set of **FOOT biomechanical characteristics**, there are a set of optimal **orthotic/footwear design parameters** which can be used to achieve a **specific clinical biomechanical objective**

ENPODHE 2018

The University of Salford is proud to host the 7th ENPODHE conference **March 21-23rd 2018.**



University of
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MANCHESTER

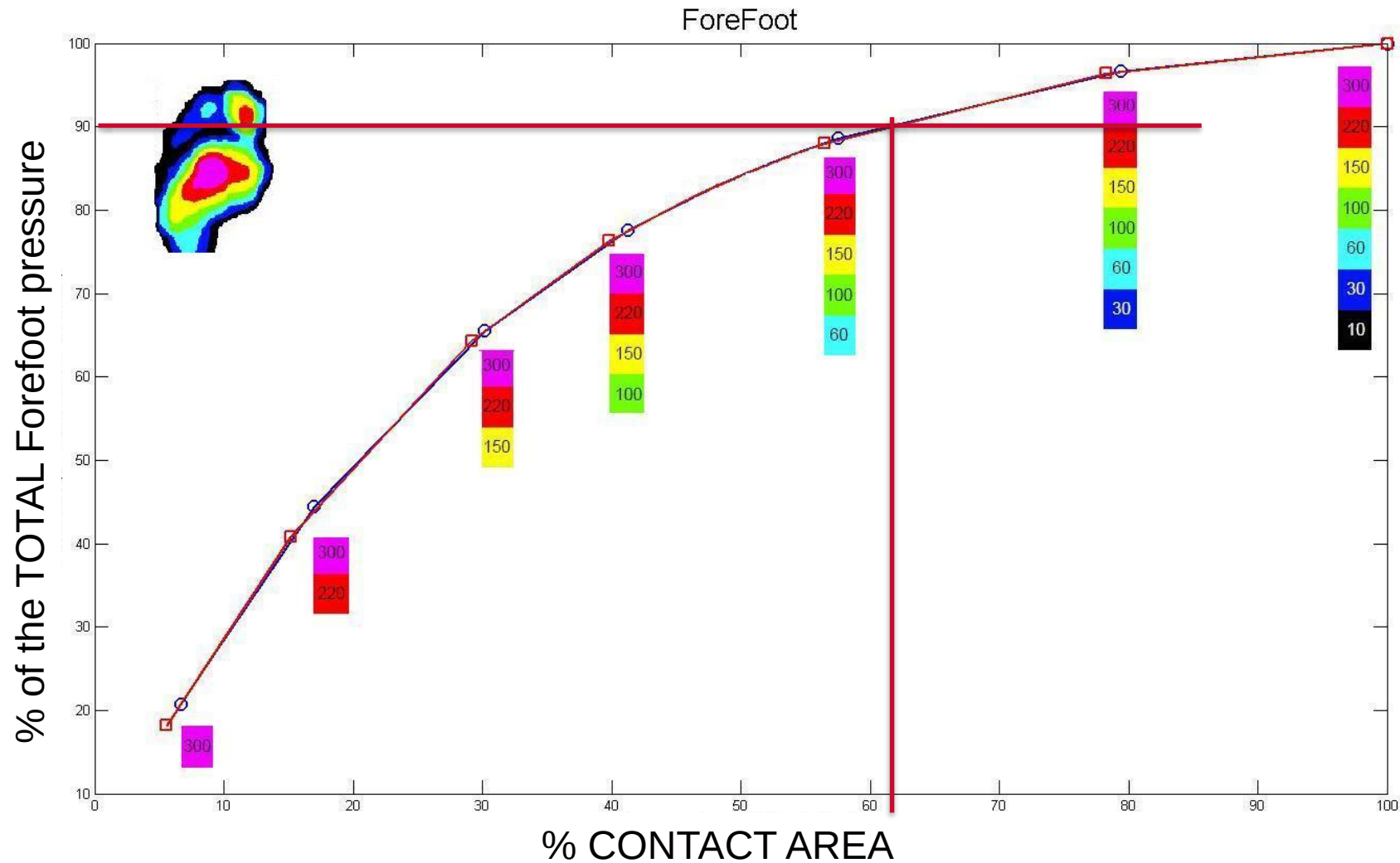
**CONFERENCE
SALFORD 2018**

Dr Sicco Bus

“Evidence based approach
to off loading the diabetic
foot?”

**International Working
Group on the Diabetic**

Foot. <http://iwgdf.org/>



Clinical Care/Education/Nutrition/Psychosocial Research
ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Custom Therapeutic Insoles Based on Both Foot Shape and Plantar Pressure Measurement Provide Enhanced Pressure Relief

TAMMY M. OWINGS, DENG¹
JULIE L. WOERNER, BS¹
JASON D. FRAMPTON¹

PETER R. CAVANAGH, DSC, PhD^{1,2}
GEORGEANNE BOTEK, DPM³

OBJECTIVE — The purpose of this study was to determine whether custom insoles tailored to contours of the barefoot pressure distribution and shape of a patient's foot can reduce plantar pressures in the metatarsal head (MTH) region to a greater extent than conventional custom insoles.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS — Seventy regions of elevated barefoot pressures (mean peak 834 kPa under MTHs) were identified in 20 subjects with diabetes. Foam box impressions of their feet were sent to three different orthotic supply companies for fabrication of custom insoles. One company was also given plantar pressure data, which were incorporated into the insole design. Measurements of in-shoe plantar pressures were recorded during gait for the three custom insoles in a flexible and a rocker-bottom shoe. Peak pressure and force-time integral were extracted for analysis.

RESULTS — In 64 of 70 regions, the shape-plus-pressure-based insole in the flexible shoe achieved superior unloading compared with the two shape-based insoles. On average, peak pressure was reduced by 32 and 21% (both $P \leq 0.0001$) and force-time integral by 40 and 34% (both $P < 0.0001$) compared with the shape-based insoles. At the midfoot, force-time integral was increased by 51 and 33% (both $P < 0.01$). Similar trends were found using the rocker-bottom shoe.

CONCLUSIONS — Compared with insoles based only on shape, the use of foot shape with barefoot plantar pressure measurements in designing custom insoles results in enhanced offloading of high-pressure areas under the forefoot. This offloading was achieved by a greater transfer of load to the midfoot without additional loading of other forefoot structures.

Diabetes Care 31:839–844, 2008

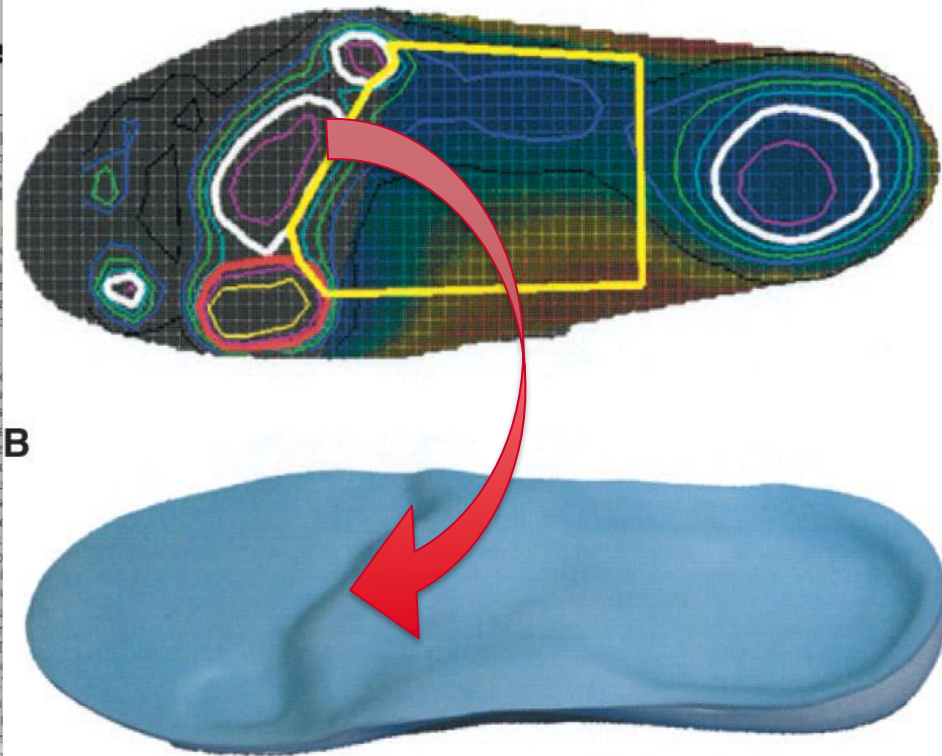
Custom insoles are frequently prescribed for individuals with diabetic neuropathy to offload high pressures from the metatarsal heads (MTHs) and other areas, which reduces the risk of plantar ulceration (1–3). Insoles provide the important interface between the foot

and the shoe and, together with outsole modifications (4,5), offer the most direct approach to the reduction of potentially damaging tissue stresses on the plantar aspect of the foot. The Medicare Therapeutic Shoe Bill recognized the importance of this intervention for primary and

secondary ulcer prevention (6). The current reimbursement schedule allows for three pairs of insoles per year and of shoes with sufficient additional to accommodate the insoles.

Because of concern over the heterogeneity of insoles supplied under Medicare coverage and their varied efficacy, required methods of manufacturing quality for reimbursement have been defined in the following extract from the most commonly used Medicare code, A5313: "For diabetics only, ple density insert, custom molded model of patient's foot, total contact patient's foot, including arch, has minimum of 3/16 inch material of 35 durometer or higher, including filler and other shaping material, fabricated" (7). These requirements emphasize the shape-based component of insole design because a long-standing tenet of therapeutic shoemaking states that "insoles provide optimal contact" (3,8,9). The other main focus of design attention has been on features as metatarsal pads and bars that are designed to offload pressures from prominences in specific regions. The sign and placement of such devices is traditionally part of the podiatrist's repertoire, although a number of studies using pressure distribution measurement have shown that variations in placement of such features by as little as 5 mm can have a dramatic effect on their offloading efficacy (10,11).

This study was designed to test the hypothesis that the combination of foot shape measurement with the placement



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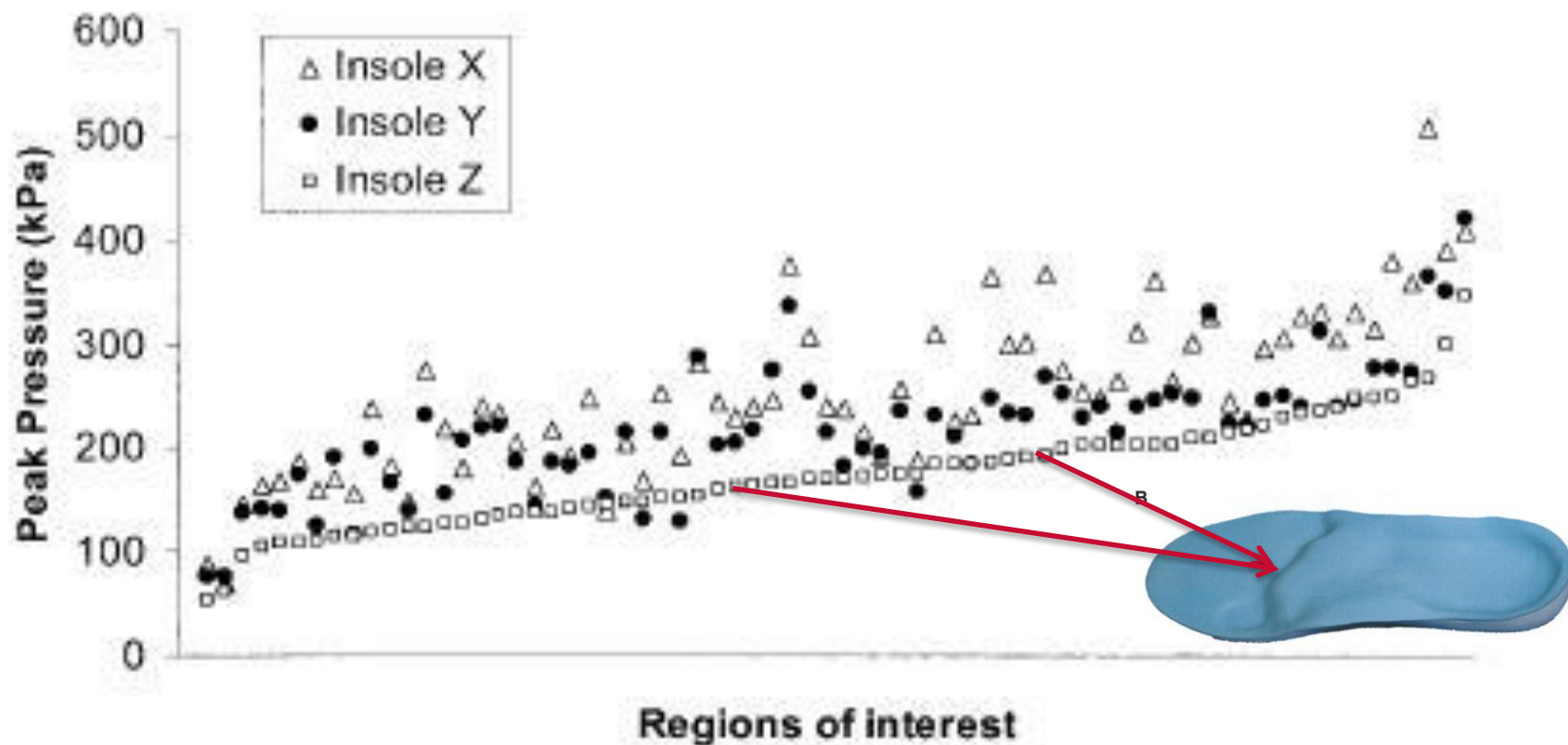
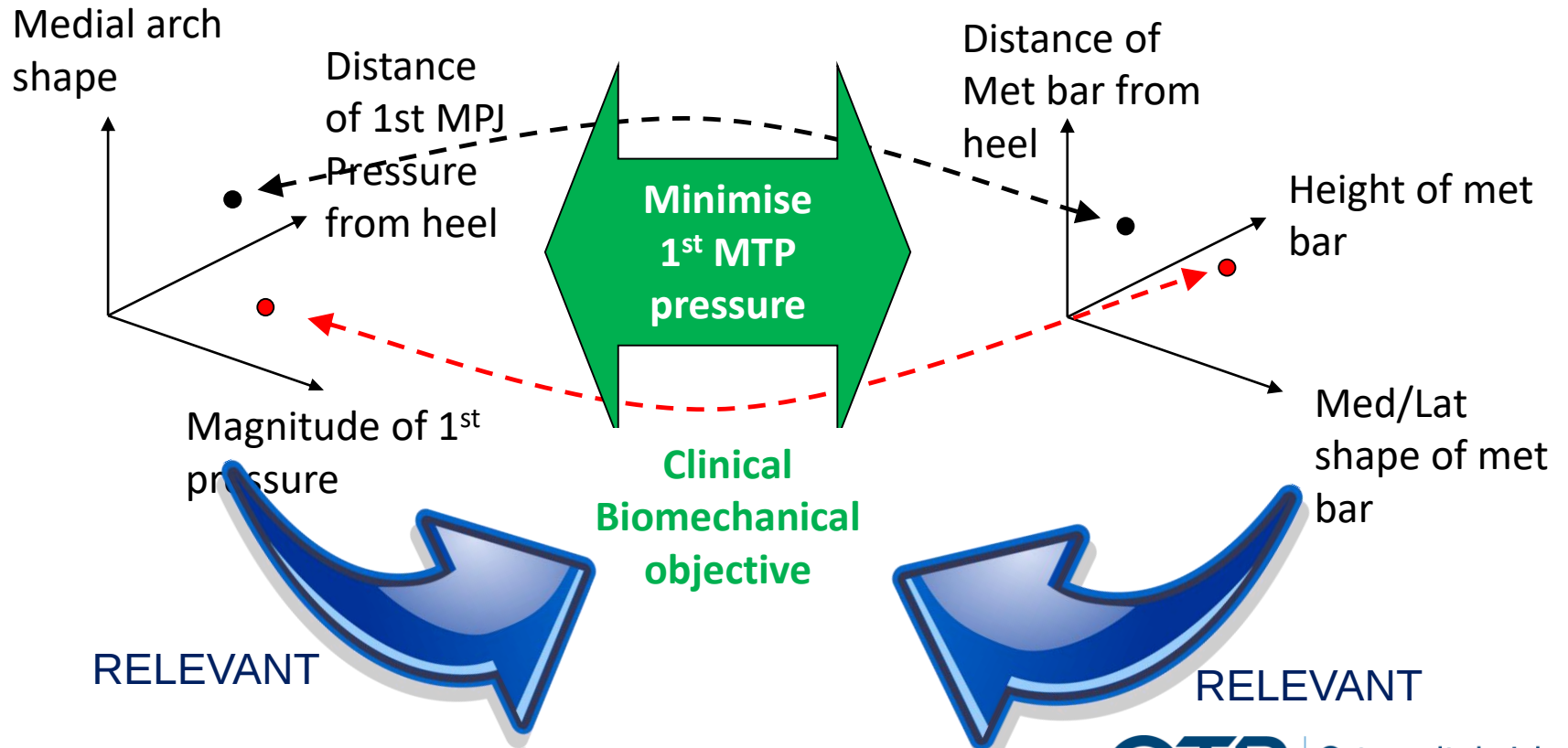
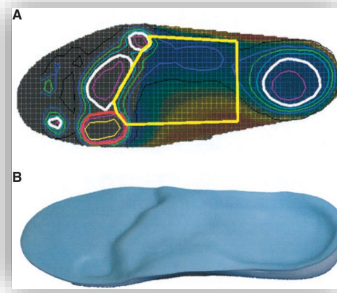
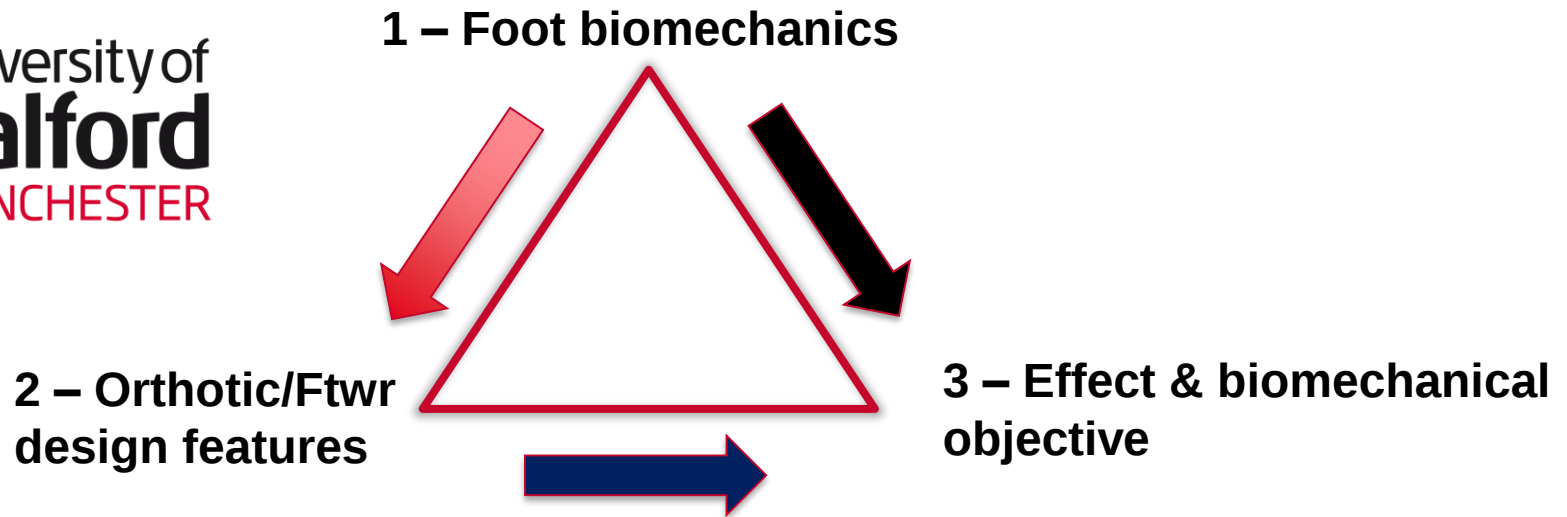


Figure 2—Individual peak pressures (ranked by peak pressure of insole Z) at 70 ROIs for insoles in flexible shoes. Δ , insole X; $\bullet$, insole Y; $\square$, insole Z.



We need to build ***explicit relationships***
between

- (1) foot biomechanics
- (2) orthotic / footwear designs
- (3) orthotic / footwear effects



Lets answer.....

1. Do we know how changing orthotic/footwear features affects plantar pressure? (2 to 3)
2. Are we measuring the right foot characteristics to be able to predict the BEST off loading designs? (1 to 2)
3. Is the hassle/cost of getting (MEASURING?) foot data worth it in terms of the orthotic/footwear achieving its aim? (1 to 3)

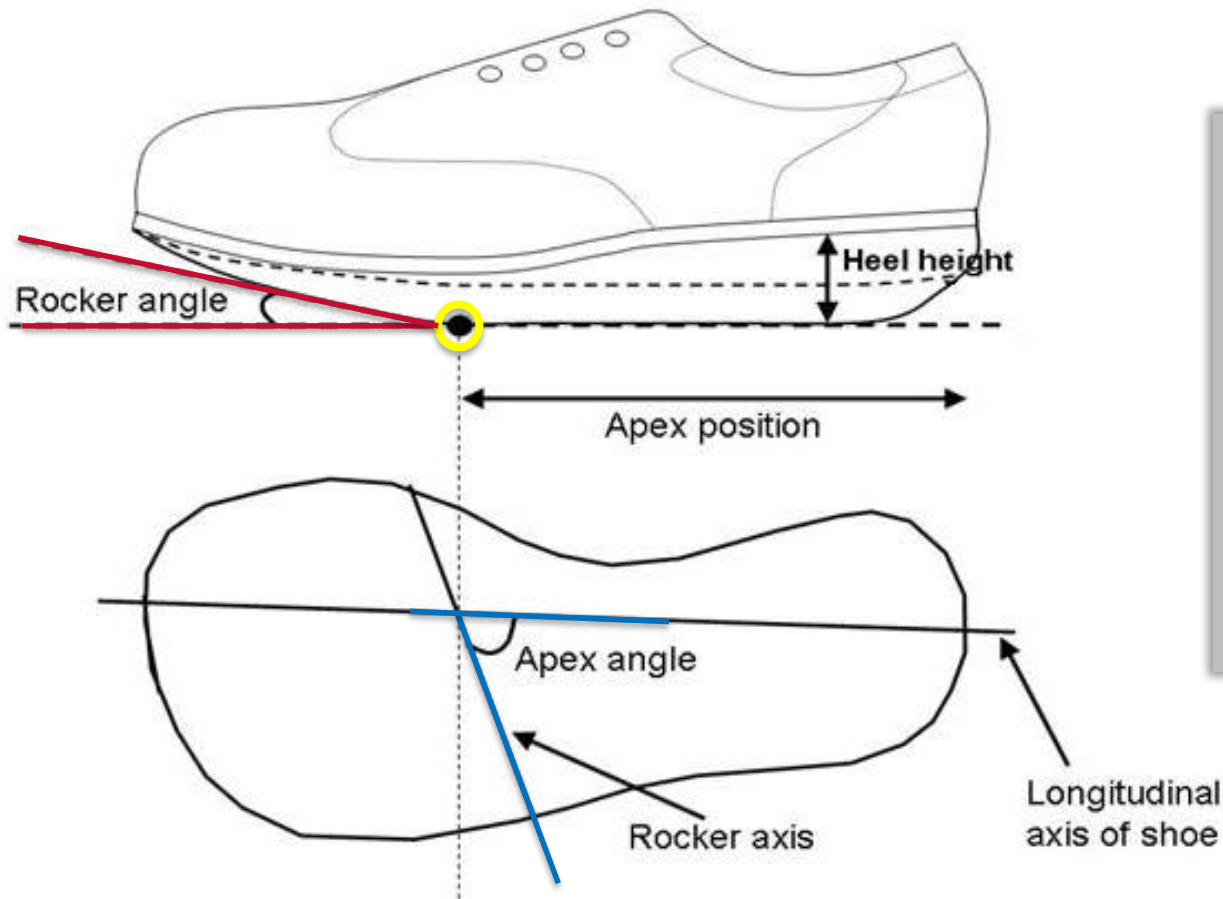
1. Use of **foot biomechanics data** to optimise **rocker footwear** for pressure reduction in diabetes



2. Use of **plantar pressure data** to optimise **orthotic features** under the forefoot



Rocker = 3 DESIGN features



1. Apex Position

2. Rocker Angle

3. Apex Angle

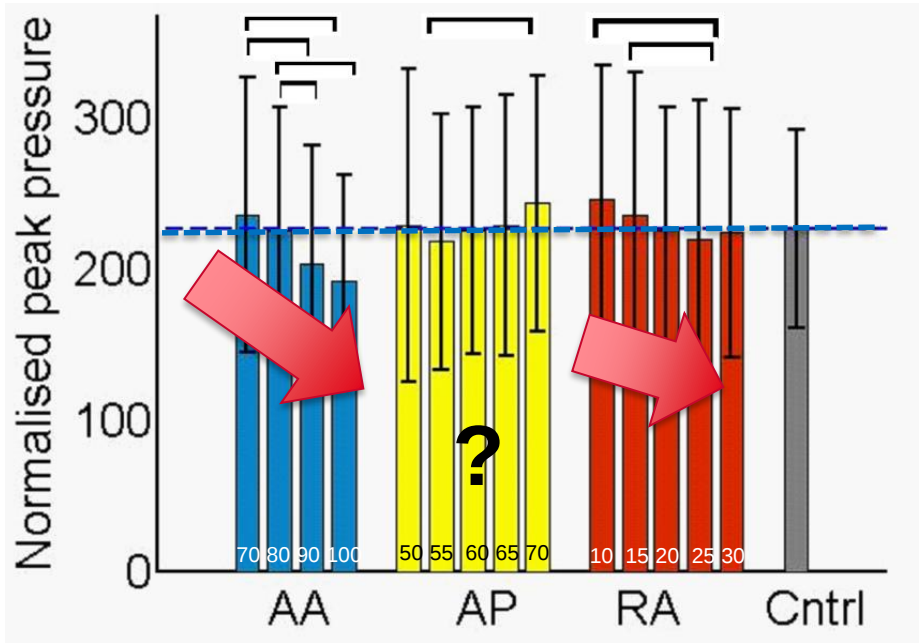
Study 1: **Rocker angle vs Apex position vs Apex Angle**

- ✓ n=30 diabetes
- ✓ Controlled walking speed
- ✓ Plantar pressure in 12 shoes
(variations of **RA**, **AP**, **AA**)



Shoe	Rocker angle (RA)	Apex position (AP)	Apex angle (AA)
1 (control)	(Heel height)	-	-
2 (reference*)	20° (3 cm)	60%	+80°
3 (RA1)	10° (1 cm)	60%	+80°
4 (RA2)	15° (2 cm)	60%	+80°
5 (RA4)	25° (4 cm)	60%	+80°
6 (RA5)	30° (5 cm)	60%	+80°
7 (AP1)	20° (3 cm)	50%	+80°
8 (AP2)	20° (3 cm)	55%	+80°
9 (AP4)	20° (3 cm)	65%	+80°
10 (AP5)	20° (3 cm)	70%	+80°
11 (AA1)	20° (3 cm)	60%	70°
12 (AA2)	20° (3 cm)	60%	90°
13 (AA4)	20° (3 cm)	60%	100°

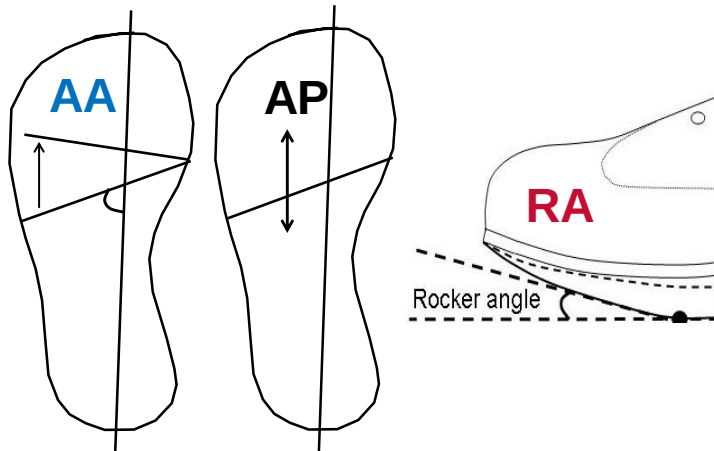
Mean effect: 1st MPJ



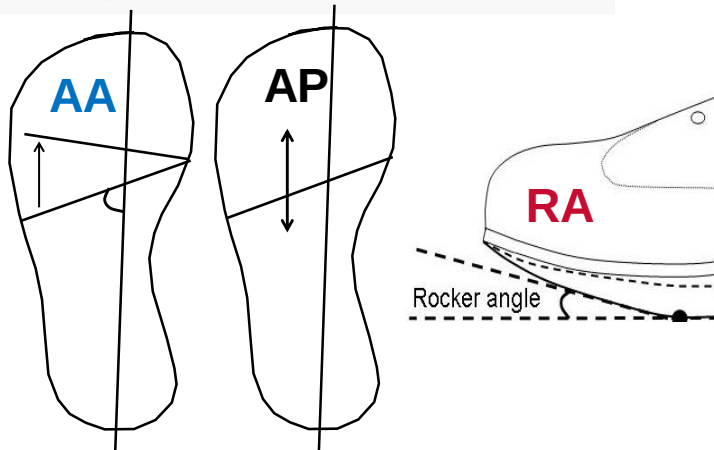
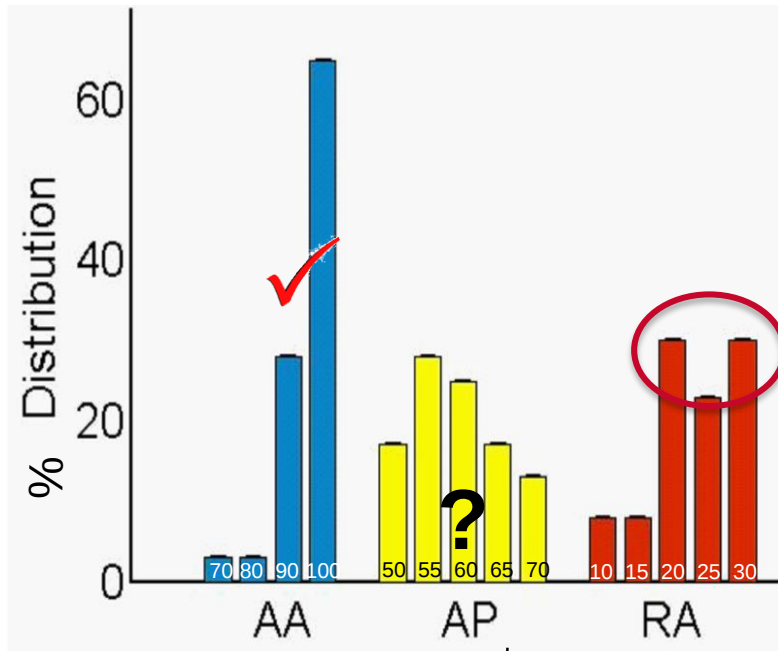
Pressure decreased
Apex angle increased
(more perpendicular):

No consistent change
in pressure

Slight decrease in
pressure as rocker
angle increased



Distribution of optimal design



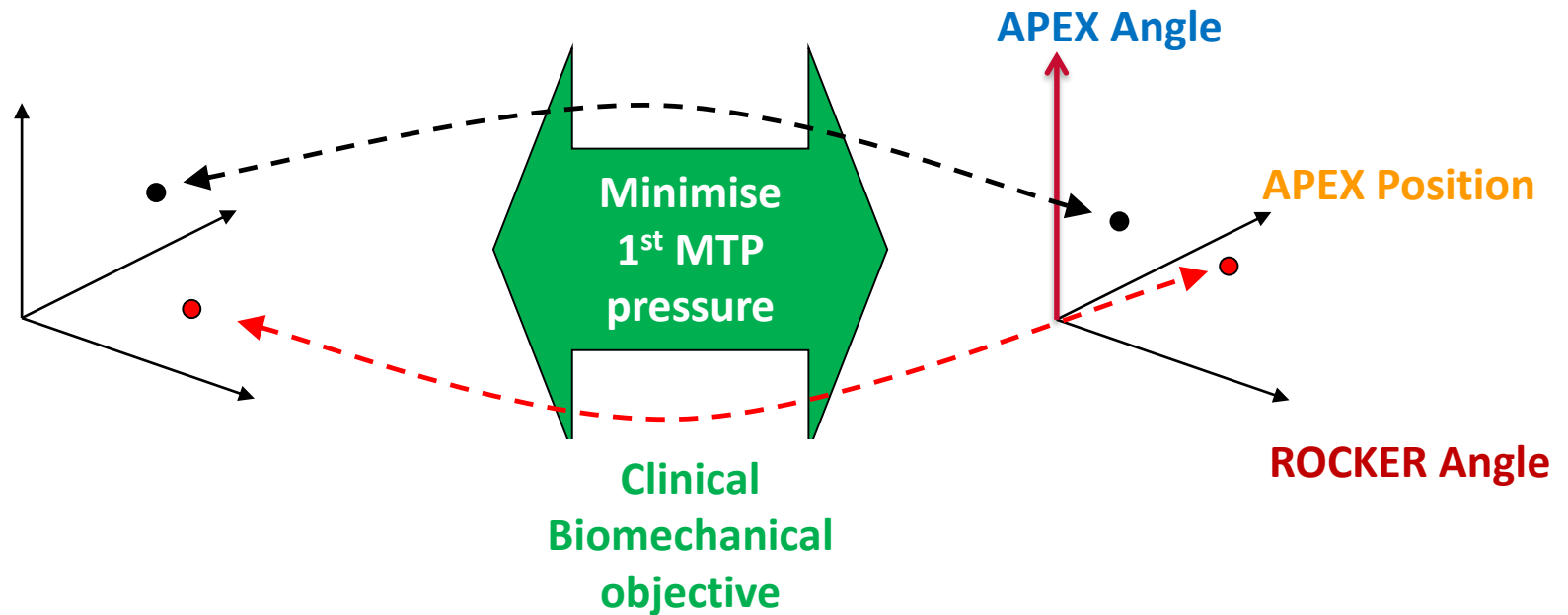
- **Apex Angle** – 90° and 100 ° are BEST for >90% of participants
- NO BEST **Apex POSITION** – optimal position different greatly.
- NO BEST **Rocker Angle**, but 3/5 higher angles gave better results

Outcomes study 1

- Apex ANGLE is optimised = 95° ✓
- Investigate **APEX POSITION** further – person specific response
- Need to establish interaction between **Rocker ANGLE** and **Apex POSITION**



Study 2: Understanding the effect of varying rocker angle and apex position on plantar pressure.

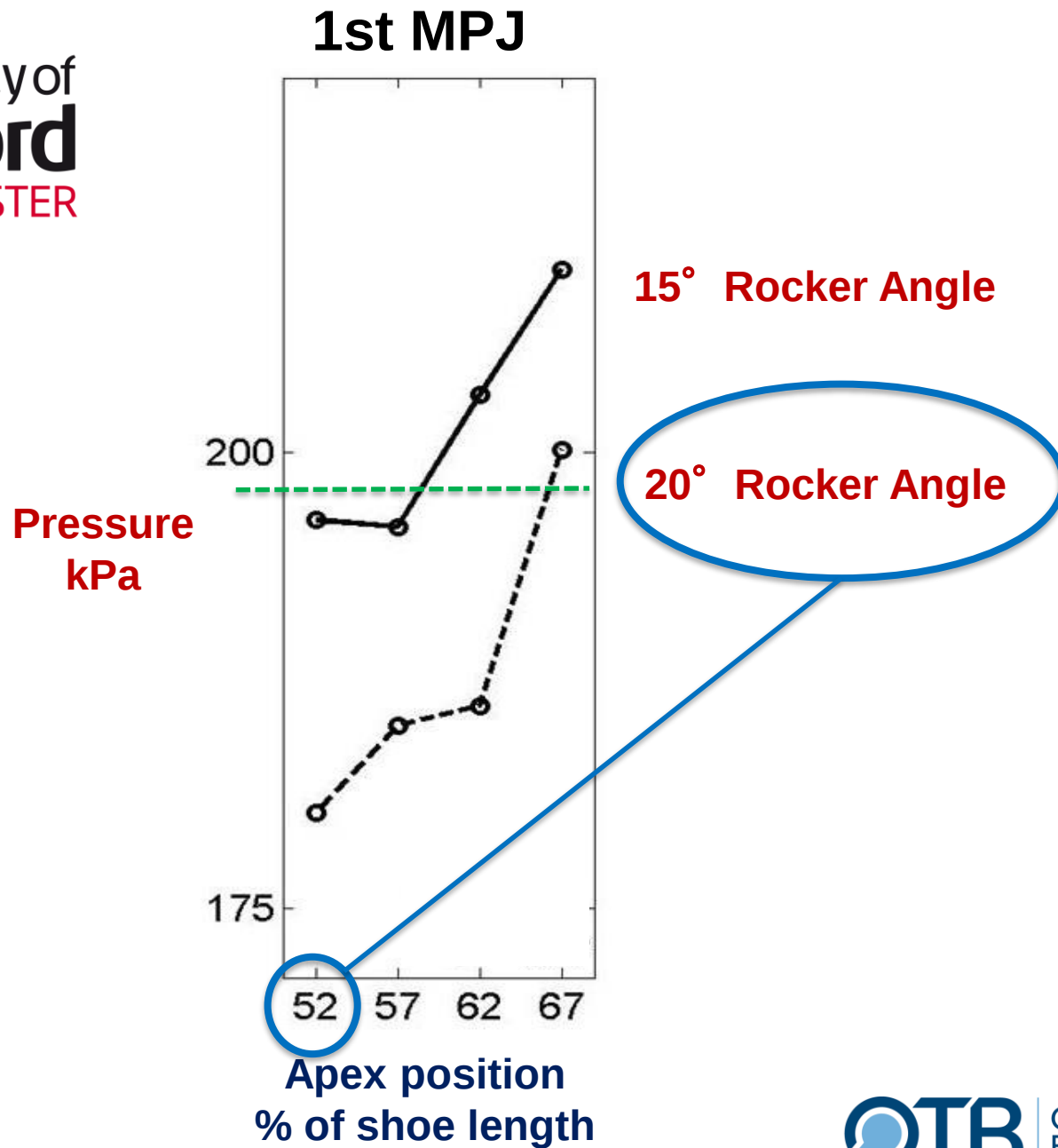


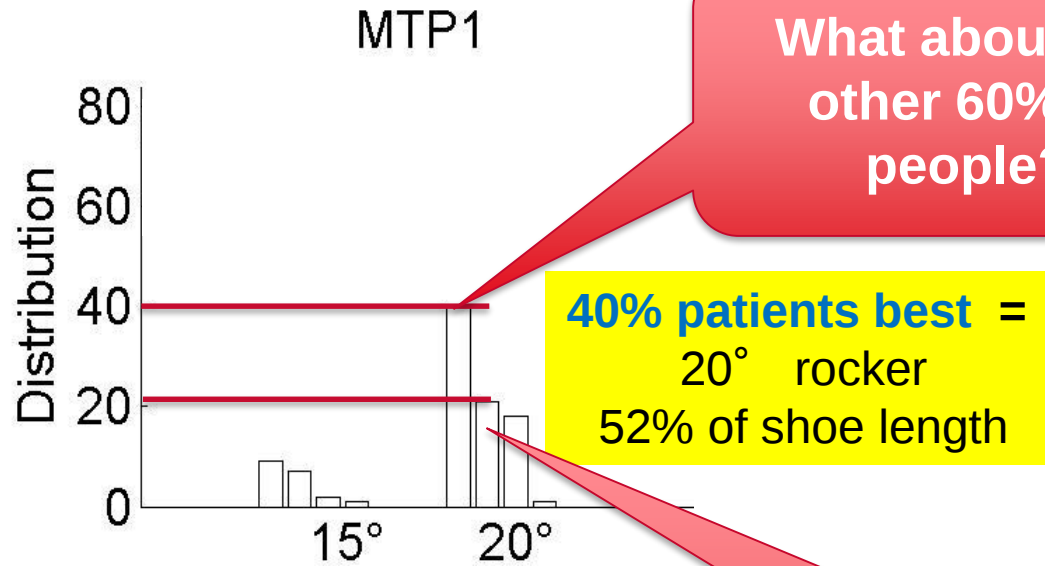
Varying Rocker angle and Apex position

- **n= 87** with diabetes (Salford & Cologne)

Shoe	Rocker angle (RA)	Apex position (AP)
1	15°	52%
2	15°	57%
3	15°	62%
4	15°	67%
5	20°	52%
6	20°	57%
7	20°	62%
8	20°	67%







What about the
other 60% of
people?

What about in
between 52% and
57%?

What is the compromise if we give everyone
the **GROUP BEST** versus their own
PERSONAL BEST?

PERSONAL best vs GROUP best shoe

Owings et al (2009).
Cavanagh and Bus (2011)

Off-loading the diabetic foot for ulcer prevention and healing

Peter R. Cavanagh, PhD, DSc,^a and Sicco A. Bus, PhD,^b Seattle, Wash; and Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Background: Retrospective and prospective studies have shown that elevated plantar pressure is a causative factor in the development of many plantar ulcers in diabetic patients and that ulceration is often a precursor of lower extremity amputation. In this article, we review the evidence that relieving areas of elevated plantar pressure (off-loading) can prevent and heal plantar ulceration.

Results: There is no consensus in the literature concerning the role of off-loading through footwear in primary or secondary prevention of ulcers. This is likely due to the wide diversity of intervention and control conditions tested, the lack of information about off-loading efficacy of the footwear used, and the absence of a target pressure threshold for off-loading. Uncomplicated plantar ulcers should heal in 6 to 8 weeks with adequate off-loading. The total contact cast and other nonremovable devices are most effective because they eliminate the problem of nonadherence to recommendations for using a removable device. Conventional or standard therapeutic footwear is not effective in ulcer healing. Recent United States and European surveys show a large discrepancy between guidelines and clinical practice in off-loading diabetic foot ulcers. Many clinics continue to use methods that are known to be ineffective or have not been proven effective, while ignoring methods that have been demonstrated to be efficacious.

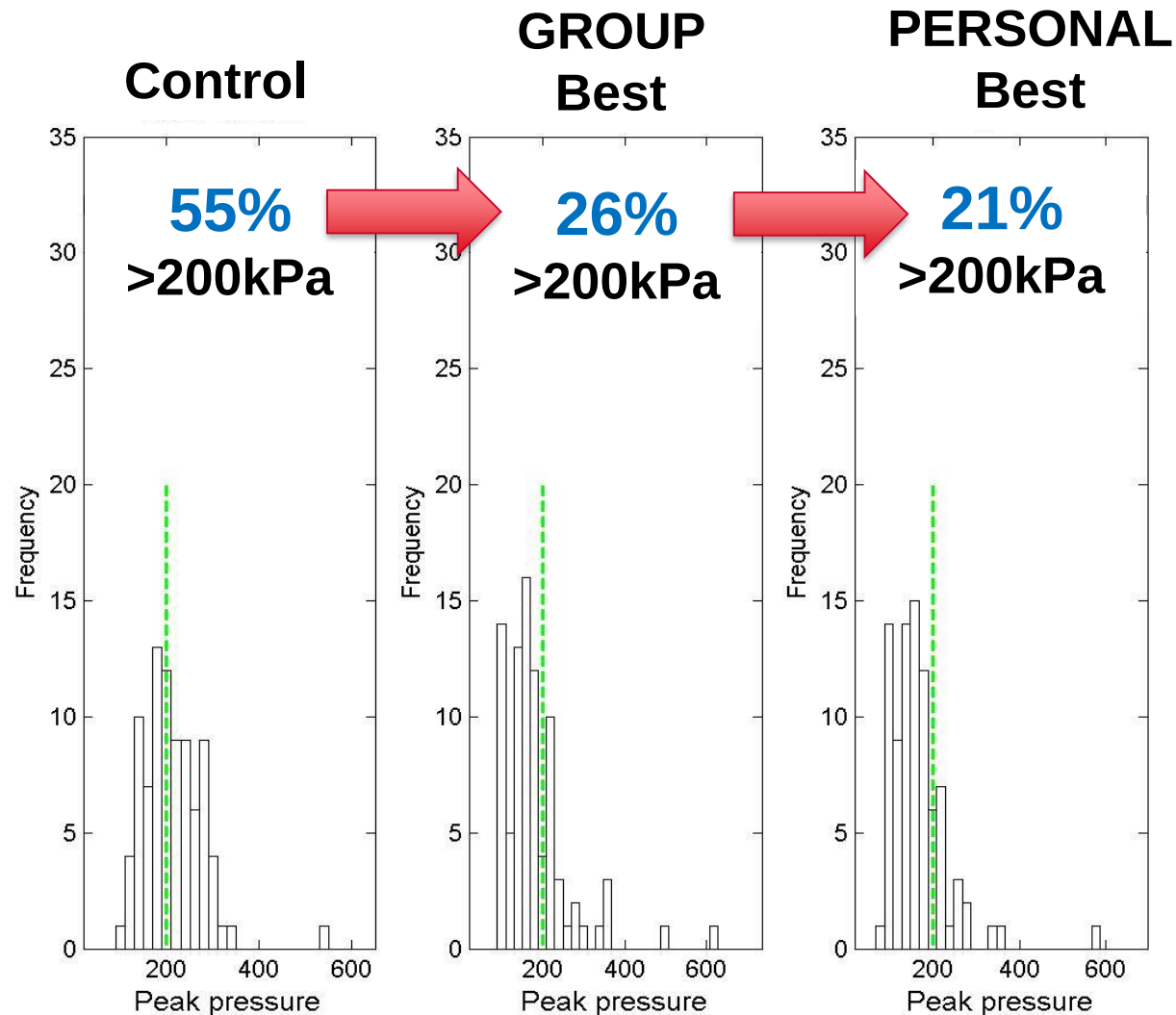
Conclusions: A number of strategies are proposed to address this situation, notably the adoption and implementation of recently established international guidelines, which are evidence-based and specific, by professional societies in the United States and Europe. Such an approach would change the often poor current expectations for healing diabetic plantar ulcers. (J Vasc Surg 2010;52:37S-43S.)

*“It may be that such a threshold is unique to each individual, but the **200 kPa value can serve as a goal for plantar off-loading until better evidence is available.**”*

How many
people
< 200kPa?

PERSONAL best vs GROUP best shoe

How many people $< 200\text{kPa}$?



PERSONAL best vs GROUP best shoe
How many people $< 200\text{kPa}$?

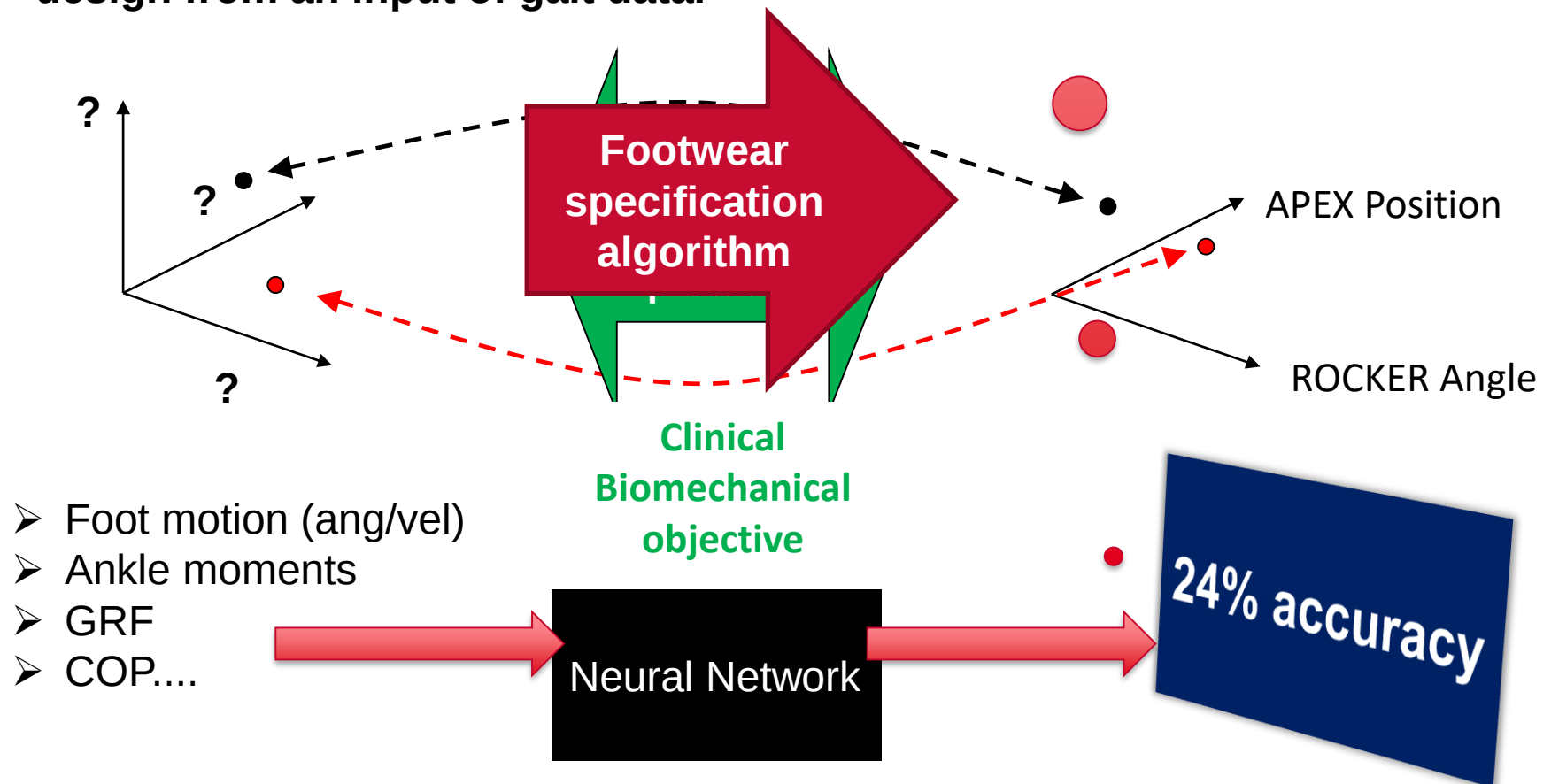
**You would need to give bespoke footwear to
100 people to get 5 extra people below 200 kPa**

Is it worth it?

**Can we short cut the decision as to who needs
bespoke footwear ?**

“Trial and error?”

Study 3: Developing an algorithm to predict optimal rocker shoe design from an input of gait data.



Lets answer.....

1. Do we know how changing footwear features affects plantar pressure variables we want to control? (2 to 3)
2. Are we measuring the right foot characteristics to be able to predict the BEST off loading footwear designs? (1 to 2)
3. Is the hassle/cost of getting (MEASURING ?) foot data worth it in terms of the footwear achieving?

YES –
Apex Angle
Apex Position
Rocker Angle

NO –
Wrong measures?
Too complex?
Multiple Optimal designs

NO –
Apex Angle = 95°
Apex Position = 55%
Rocker Angle = 20°

**Patient specific customisation of rocker
soles is trial and error
– go for good design
(+ *there is an evidence base for it*)**

AXIS 1:

Position of Met Bar – (a) next to peak pressure, (b) proximal to it, or c) distal to it?



Distance of
Met bar from
Pressure

AXIS 2:

- a) Poron
- b) EVA
- c) “no material” or *void*.

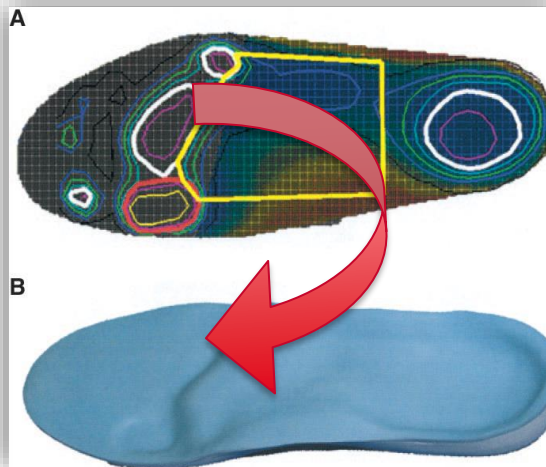


Material

Shape of met
bar



Bespoke - Determined
by peak pressure



Clinical Care/Education/Nutrition/Psychosocial Research

Custom Therapeutic Insoles Based on Both Foot Shape and Plantar Pressure Measurement Provide Enhanced Pressure Relief

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JULIE L. WOERNER, BS¹
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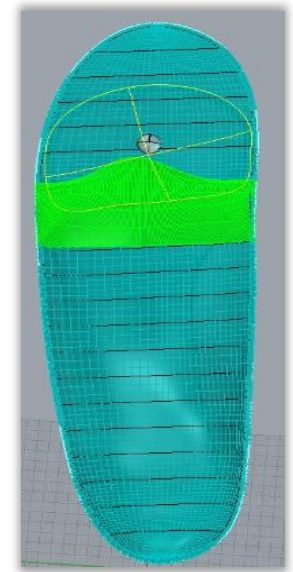
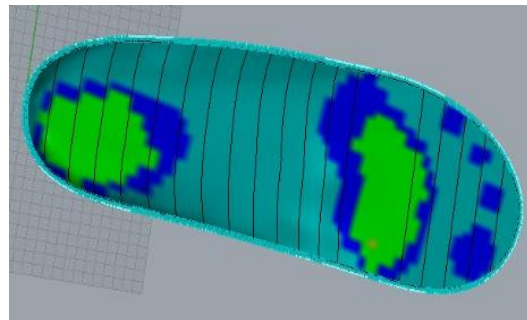
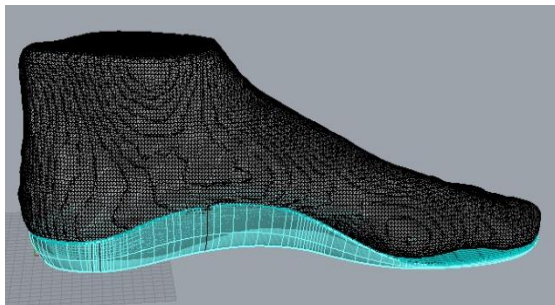
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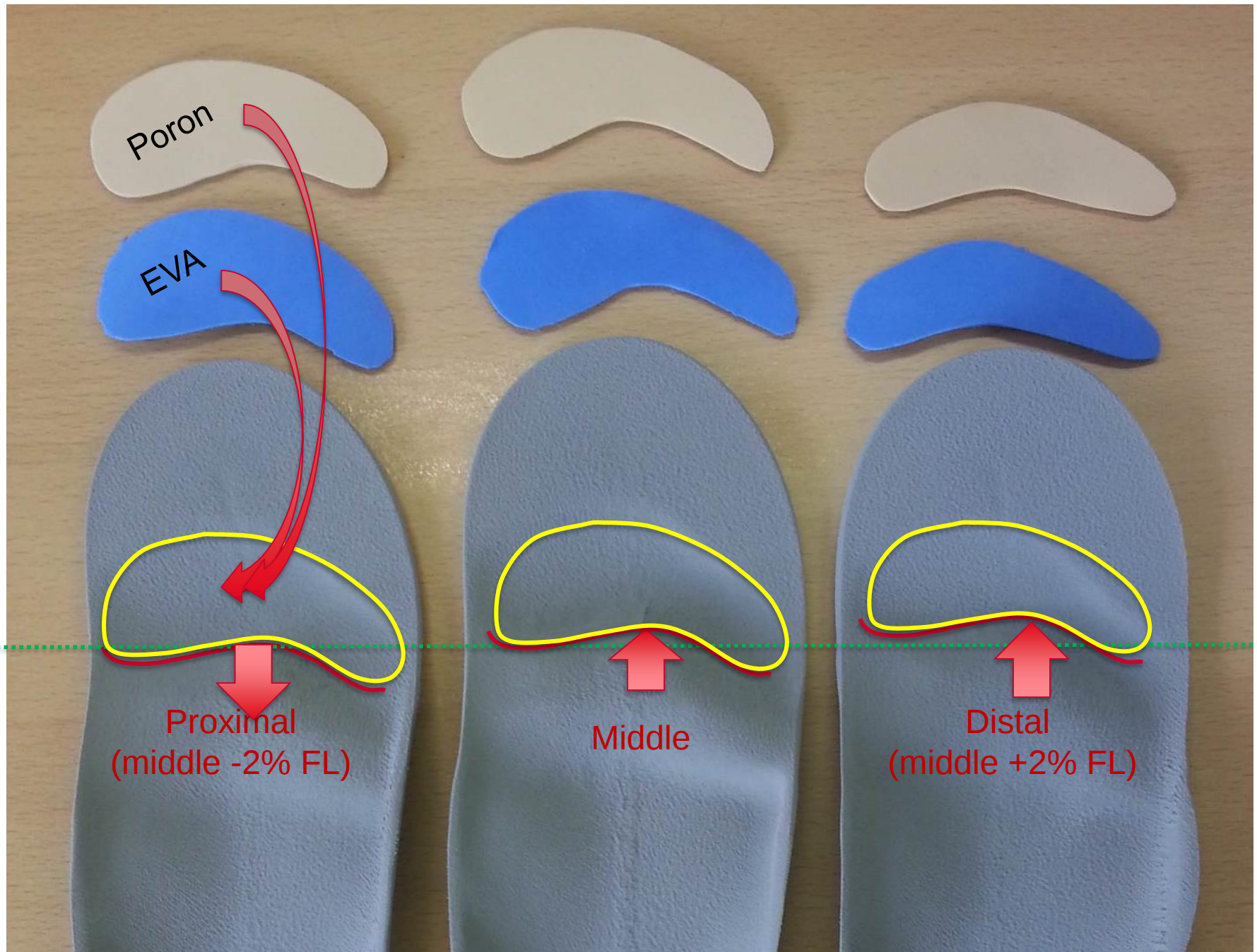
This study was designed to test the hypothesis that the combination of foot shape measurement with the placement

From the ¹Department of Biomedical Engineering, Letter Research Institute, Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland.

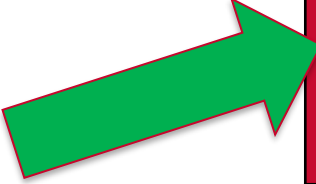
Input data to the orthotic design:

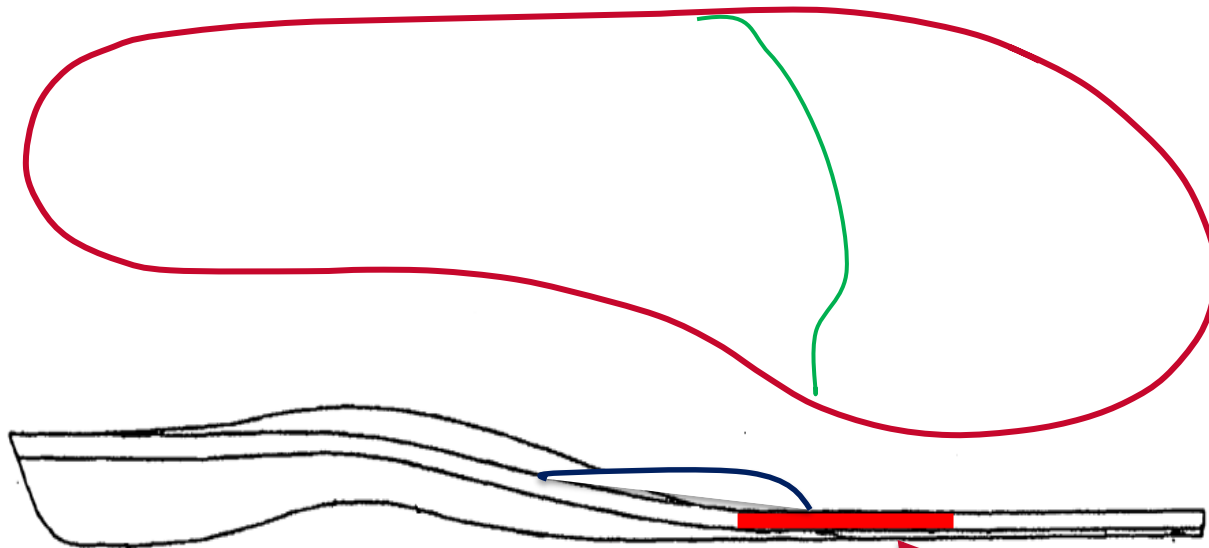
1. 3D foot scan
2. Plantar pressure data





Insole 1

 AXIS 2		 AXIS 1		
		Distal	Middle	Proximal
	EVA	Insole 1	Insole 2	Insole 3
	Poron	Insole 4	Insole 5	Insole 6
	Void	Insole 7	Insole 8	Insole 9



Data collection

Sample:

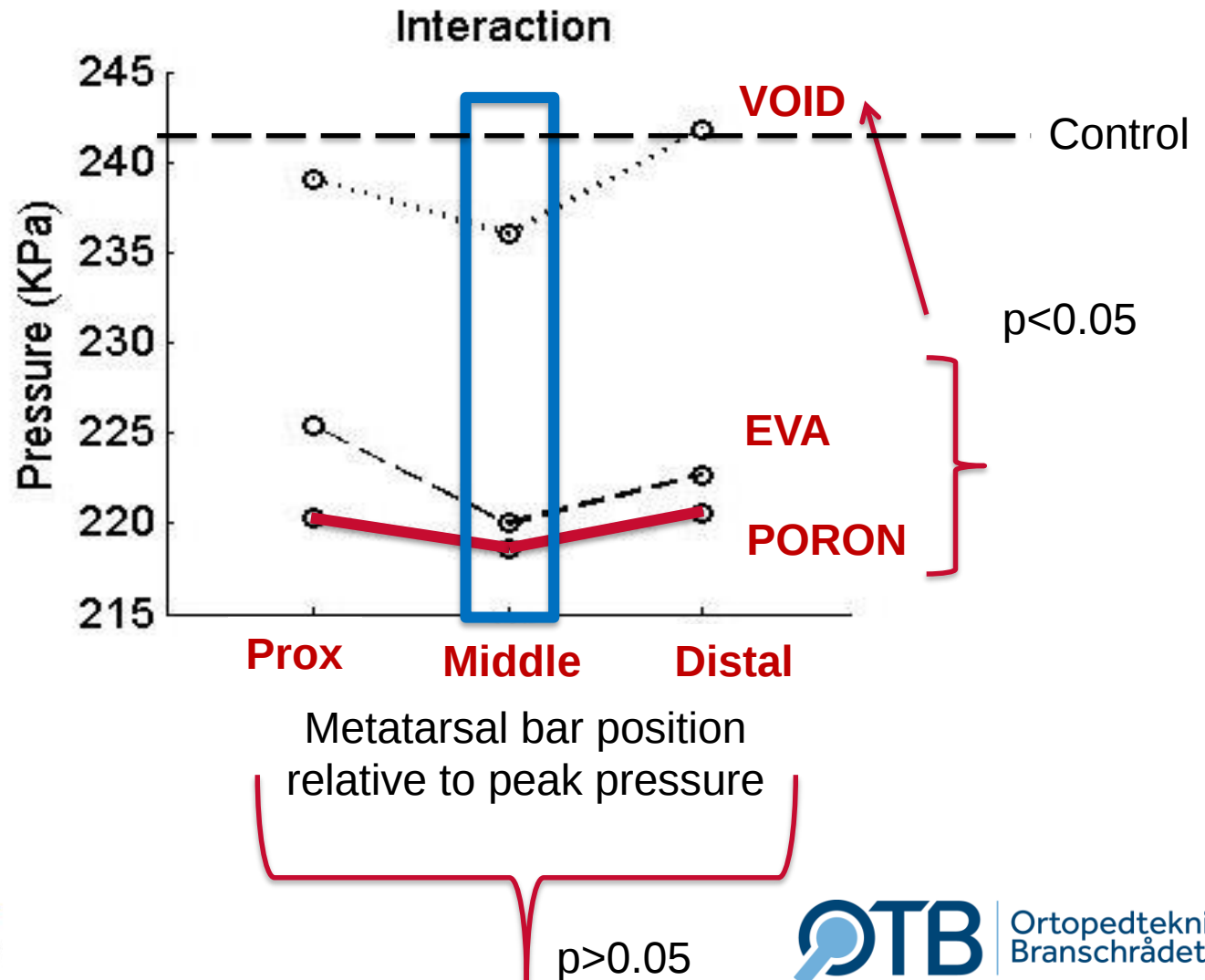
- n=60 diabetic patients with neuropathy with no history of previous ulceration

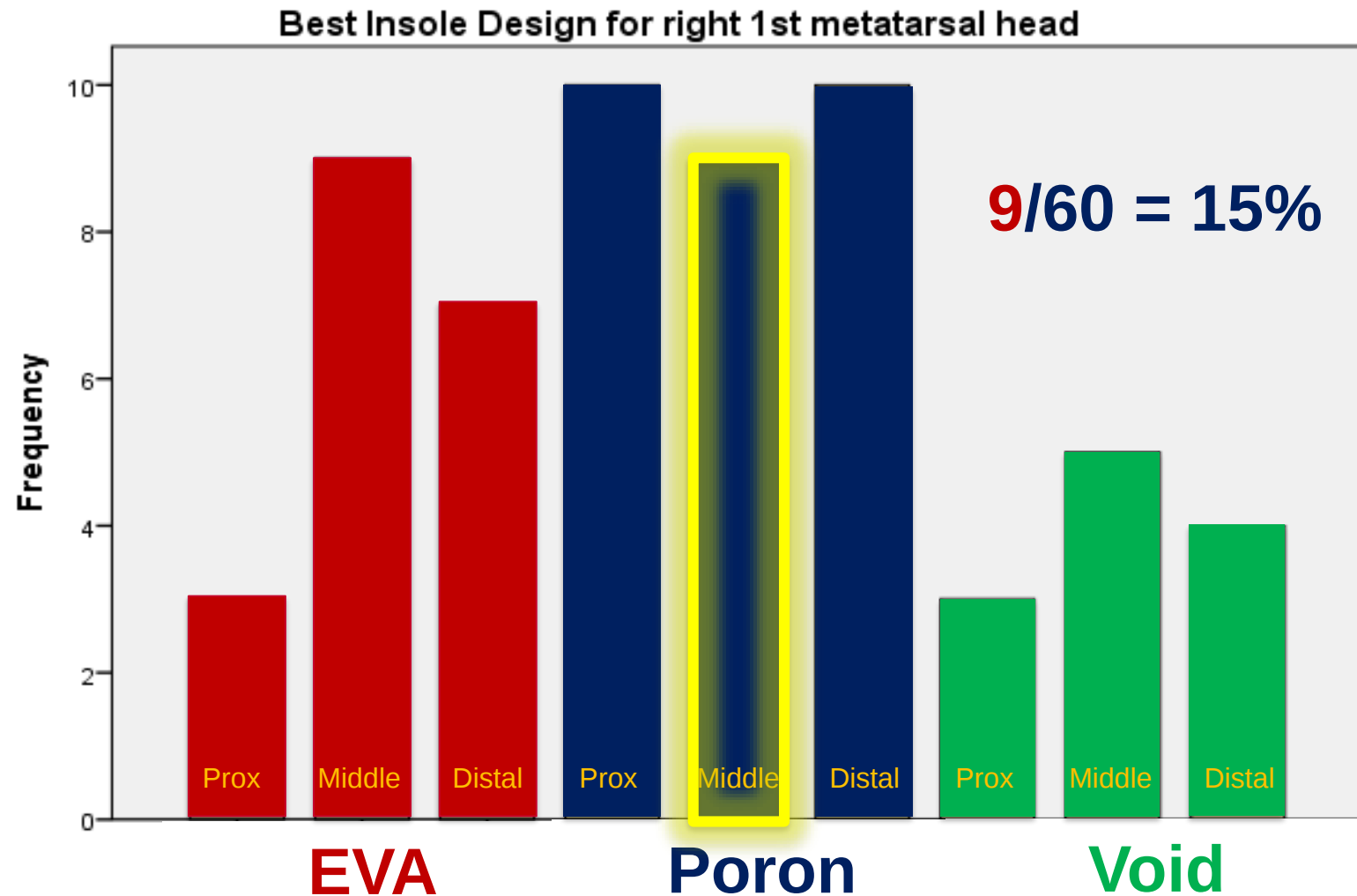
Shoes:

- Retail shoes: achieve the highest offloading without changing patient's shoe

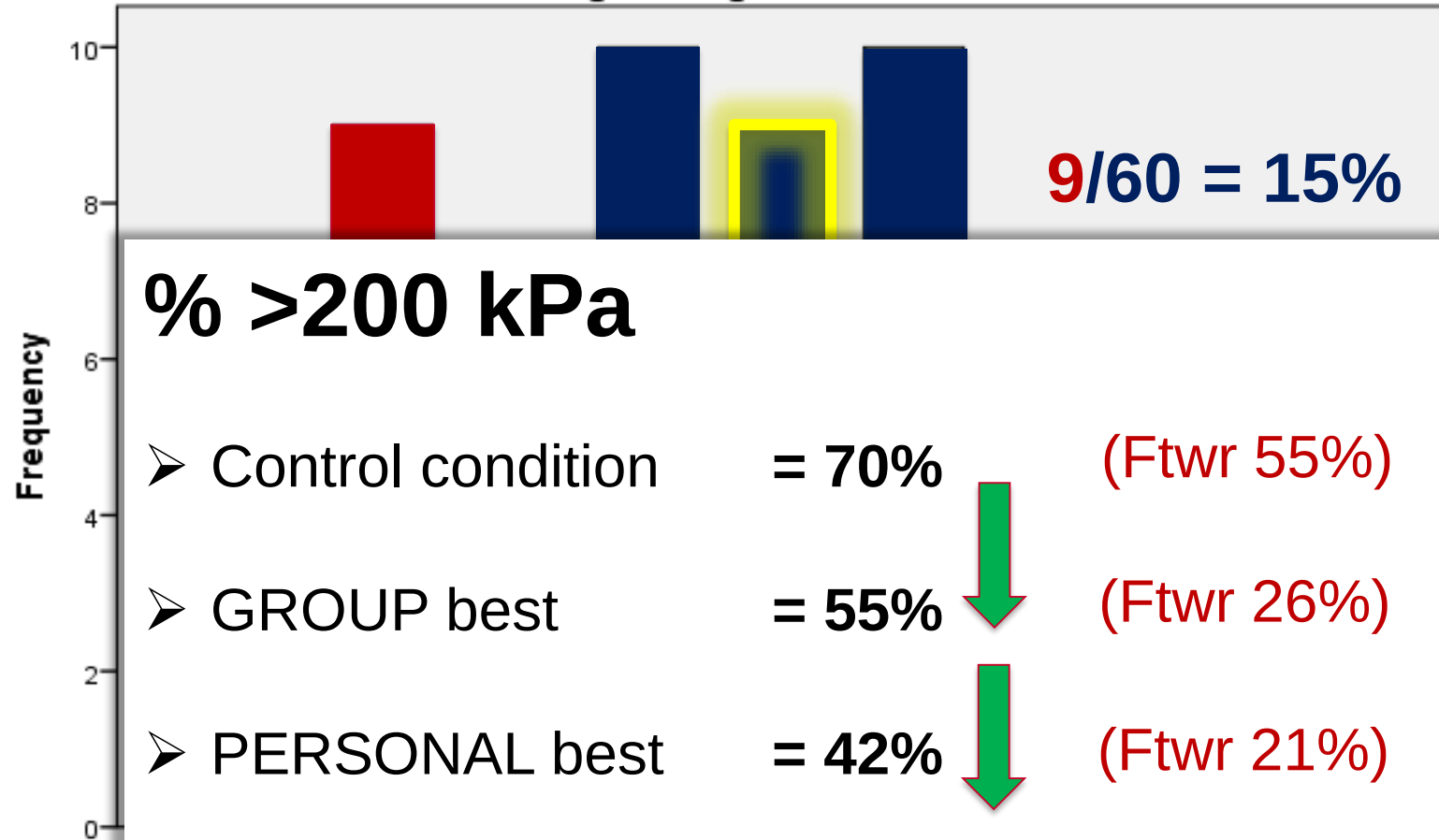


What is best ?





Best Insole Design for right 1st metatarsal head



% >200 kPa

- Control condition = 70% (Ftwr 55%)
- GROUP best = 55% (Ftwr 26%)
- PERSONAL best = 42% (Ftwr 21%)

Personalising helps **13 extra people**

Lets answer.....

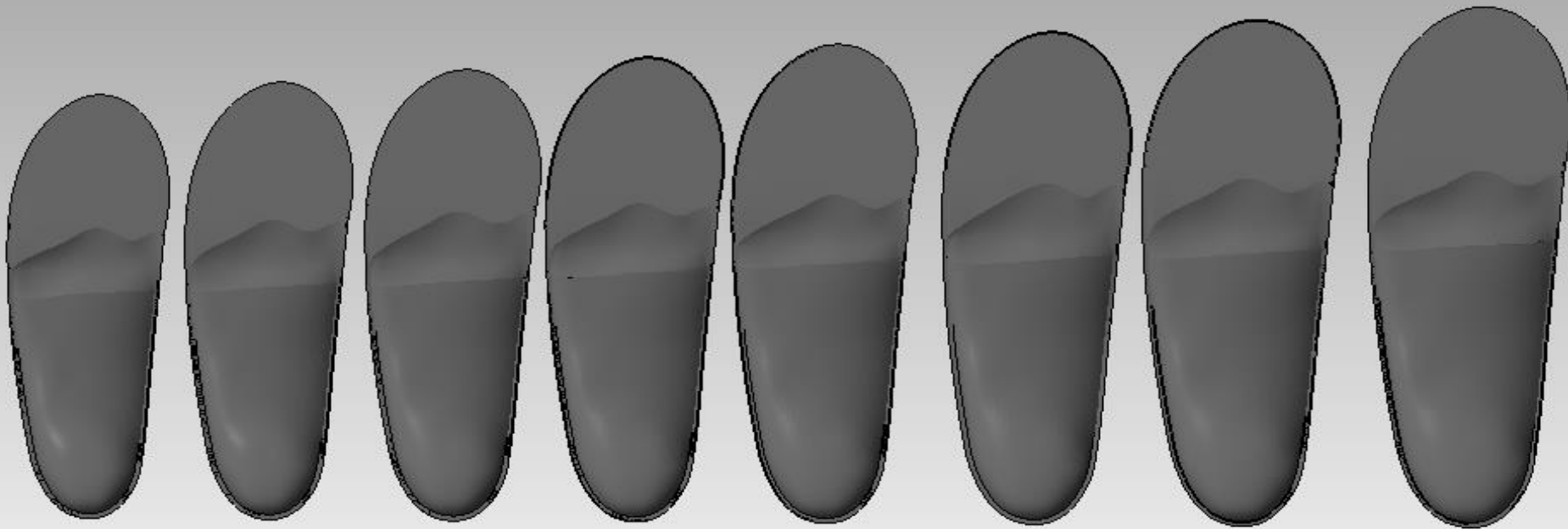
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YES –
Met bar position,
material

NO –

NO/YES
Met bar in the middle
Poron or EVA

Optimised design
now available as prefabricated orthosis



Foot biomechanics in diabetes and off loading strategies

1) If you want to reduce pressure - Footwear 1st line, Orthoses 2nd line

2) Data has given us evidenced designs

Apex Angle = 95°

Apex Position = 55%

Rocker Angle = 20°

Met bar at the site of pressure, Poron or EVA

3) We can do better

26% still >200kPa in Rocker Shoes

55% >200 kPa in orthoses

but we need to use personalised data to get the optimised designs, on each patient.....and its not worth it/difficult to predict

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