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# A clinical review on footwear modification in knee osteoarthritis patients.

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ABSTRACT:

Introduction: Osteoarthritis is considered one of the most common and significant causes of pain and disability worldwide. Treatment options for osteoarthritis in modern times vary from medicine to surgery. LWI is a helpful treatment for this condition. The purpose of this review is to determine whether changing footwear can help patients with osteoarthritis of the knee. Methodology: A random selection of research articles related to footwear modification in knee osteoarthritis patients, such as from PubMed, PubMed Central, Cochrane Library, and other internet sources. Discussion: The study articles were examined at random, and their conclusions were documented without regard to how they arrived at their findings. Conclusion: The lateral wedge insole is effective in eliminating pain and improving quality of life in patients with medial knee osteoarthritis.

Keywords: Knee osteoarthritis, Footwear, Modification, and Lateral wedge insole A clinical review on footwear modification in knee osteoarthritis patients.

#### Introduction:

Osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint condition characterized by deterioration of the joint's articular surface, which results in pain and restricted joint movement.<sup>1,2,3</sup> It is a significant cause of disability, particularly among individuals aged 40 and older, due to its impact on joint function and mobility.<sup>4,5</sup> Evidence suggests that the medial compartment is 10 times more affected than the lateral.<sup>1,2</sup> Osteoarthritis affects about 595 million of the population, which is about 7.6% of the population globally in 2020.<sup>6</sup> In India, the prevalence rate of osteoarthritis (2016) is about 22% to 39%.<sup>7</sup>

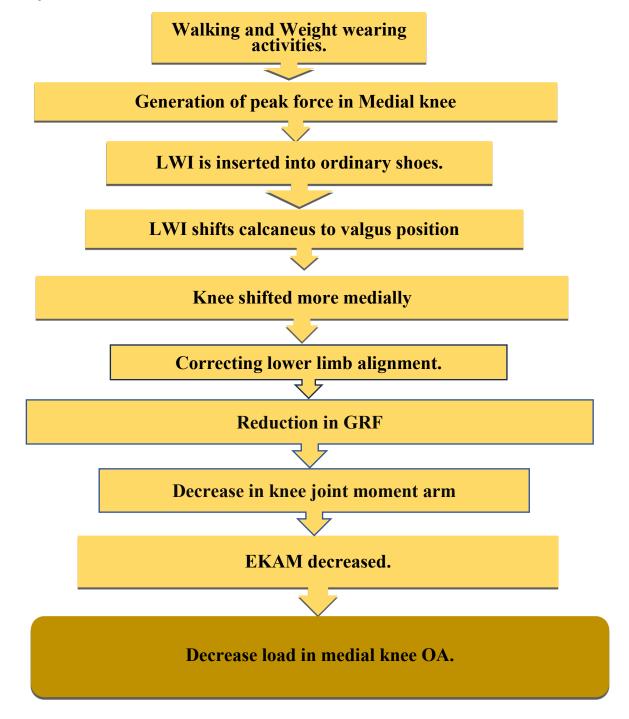
Osteoarthritis in the knee has led to instability in the frontal plane, resulting in excessive varus motion or increased force during gait, which is worsened by lateral thrust.<sup>8,9</sup> Increased force may be a contributing factor in the progression of knee osteoarthritis.<sup>1,10,11,12</sup> It is seen that in healthy subjects, between 71%- 89% of total knee force is transmitted through the medial tibiofemoral compartment, compared to 100% in osteoarthritis.<sup>1,10,11,12</sup> It was seen that lateral wedges insole and barefoot walking reduced the knee adduction angular impulse in the early stance and reduced the external knee adduction moment in the later stance as compared to the control shoe.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, our study aims to review on footwear modification in knee osteoarthritis patients.

# Mechanism:

During walking and weight-bearing activities, the medial compartment of the knee typically experiences higher peak forces compared to the lateral compartment; this increased load on the medial side can contribute to the higher prevalence of osteoarthritis in that specific compartment.<sup>14</sup> The use of lateral wedge insoles is considered a conservative treatment for knee osteoarthritis patients, insoles which are made of sponge rubber material and are

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inserted into ordinary shoes.<sup>1</sup> Sasaki and Yasuda (1987) reported on the lateral insole.<sup>1,15</sup> Wedge insoles work by shifting the calcaneus into the valgus position relative to the tibia, thereby shifting the tibia more medially and correcting the alignment of the lower limb to a more anatomical position, lateral wedge insole shifts the point of application of ground reaction force towards the outside of the foot or resultant reduction in ground reaction force and lateralization of the center of pressure, the lateral shift lightly decreases the length of knee joint moment arm; therefore, the knee extension adduction moment is also reduced, and leading to a decrease in load in the medial compartment.<sup>16</sup> The mechanism of footwear modification in knee osteoarthritis patients.



Flow chart-1 Mechanism of footwear modification in knee osteoarthritis patients.

# Methodology:

The search for the relevant journal was carried out referring to many different databases, such as PubMed, PubMed Central, Cochrane Library, and other internet sources.

## Abbreviations:

- > OA: Osteoarthritis
- ➤ LWI: Lateral wedge insole
- > MKOA: Medial knee osteoarthritis
- > EKAM: External knee adduction moment
- ➢ KAAI: Knee adduction angular impulse
- ➢ GRF: Ground reaction force

# Data extraction and analysis:

Four reviewers independently completed data extraction and reviewed the extracted information. The following study characteristics include: Introduction (research aim)

- 1. Mechanism
- 2. No. of subjects include
- 3. Methodology
- 4. Conclusion

## **Study Selection:**

Our study included osteoarthritis patients in the age group  $\geq$  40-80 years. The detailed inclusion and exclusion categories are described in Table 1. Table 1: Selection Criteria.

| Criteria         | Inclusion   | Exclusion                   |
|------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Study year       | 2012- 2023  | Studies before 2012         |
| Study design     | 1. A randomized control trial                         | 1. Dissertation             |
|                  | 2. Systematic review                                  | 2. Review of literature     |
|                  | 3. Meta-analysis                                      | 3. Manuscript               |
|                  | 4. Original paper                                     | 4. Abstract                 |
|                  |   | 5. Letter                   |
|                  |   | 6. Surveys                  |
| Settings         | 1. Rehabilitation center                              | 1. Community                |
|                  | 2. O.P.D  | 2. Camp                     |
|                  | 3. I.P.D  | 3. NGOs                     |
|                  | 4. Hospitals  |                             |
| Context          | 1. Lateral wedge insole                               | 1. Surgical treatment       |
|                  | 2. Barefoot walking                                   | 2. Other knee splints       |
|                  | 3. Medial wedge insole                                | 3. Assisted devices         |
|                  | 4. Control shoes                                      |                             |
| Outcome measures | 1. WOMAC scale  | 1. FIM Scale                |
|                  | 2. VAS scale  | 2. Barthel index            |
|                  | 3. Lequesne index                                     | 3. MMT Scale                |
|                  | 4. Kellgren–Lawrence grade (radiological              | 4. Mini mental status scale |
|                  | definition of OA )                                    | 5. VCT Scale                |
|                  | 5. 6-minute walk test                                 | 6. MAS scale                |
|                  | 6. Health assessment questionnaire (quality of life). |                             |

| Table 2:  |
|---|
| Evidence-based studies regarding footwear modification in patients with knee osteoarthritis |

| Characteristics   | Author   | Year | Country | No. of the subject with methodology   | Types of<br>Research                   | Conclusion   |
|---|--|------|---------|---|--|--|
| Effects of various kinds of<br>lateral wedge insoles on the<br>performance of individuals<br>with knee joint<br>osteoarthritis. | Rafiaee M.,<br>Karimi M.T.<br>et al. <sup>1</sup>                      | 2012 | Iran    | Out of the (n=36)<br>patients, they were<br>divided into two<br>groups. Group A (n<br>=18) received 3mm<br>LWI, whereas group B<br>(n=18) received 7mm<br>LWI.                                  | A randomized<br>control trial<br>(RCT) | It was observed<br>that 7mm LWI is<br>more effective as<br>compared to<br>3mm LWI. Use<br>of 3mm and 7mm<br>LWI has a<br>significant<br>decrease in pain<br>and improves<br>quality of life. |
| Lateral wedge insoles as a<br>conservative pain<br>treatment for patients with<br>medial knee osteoarthritis.                   | Parkes M.J.,<br>Maricar N.,<br>Lunt M. et al.<br><sup>19</sup>         | 2013 | England | Out of (n=885)<br>patients, only (n=12)<br>were included; (n=11)<br>used LWI; and (n=1)<br>received variable<br>stiffness shoes for<br>treatment of pain with<br>medial knee<br>osteoarthritis. | Meta-analysis                          | The findings of<br>the study do not<br>support the use of<br>lateral wedge<br>insoles as a<br>conservative<br>treatment for pain<br>in patients with<br>medial knee<br>osteoarthritis.       |
| Mechanical effectiveness<br>of lateral foot wedging in<br>medial knee osteoarthritis<br>post 1 year of wear.                    | Barrios J.A.,<br>Butler R.J.,<br>Crenshaw<br>J.R. et al. <sup>18</sup> | 2013 | Dayton  | 38 patients were<br>divided into two<br>groups. Out of which,<br>intervention group<br>(n=19) received<br>wedged orthosis,<br>whereas 19 received<br>neutral orthosis in the<br>control group.  | A randomized<br>control trial<br>(RCT) | It was found that<br>in the control<br>group, there was<br>an increase in<br>knee adduction<br>moment and<br>frontal plane<br>motion over time,<br>but not in the<br>intervention<br>group.  |

| Effect of different types of<br>orthosis or shoe<br>modifications on medial<br>knee loading in patients<br>with medial knee<br>osteoarthritis: a<br>randomized trial.            | Jones R.K.,<br>Chapman<br>G.J. Parkes<br>M.J. et al. <sup>14</sup> | 2015 | United<br>Kingdom | 70 patients were<br>divided into two<br>groups. One group was<br>given a lateral wedge<br>insole, while another<br>group received<br>different shoes to see<br>medial loading in knee<br>osteoarthritis.              | A randomized<br>control trial<br>(RCT)                 | It was found that<br>different lateral<br>wedge insoles<br>show reductions<br>in medial knee<br>loading, and the<br>mobility shoe did<br>not affect medial<br>loading.  |
|--|--|------|-------------------|---|--|---|
| *Effect of lateral wedge<br>insertion on gait<br>variability evaluated using<br>wearable sensors in<br>patients with osteoarthritis<br>of the medial<br>compartment of the knee. | Ishii Y.,<br>Ishikawa M.,<br>Kurumadani<br>H. et al. <sup>13</sup> | 2023 | Japan             | 28 patients were<br>included in the study<br>and were divided into<br>two groups. Group A<br>(n=15) received<br>symptomatic patients<br>in group B (n=13)<br>include asymptomatic<br>patients.                        | A randomized<br>control trial<br>(RCT)                 | It was<br>recommended<br>that LWI could<br>improve gait<br>variability and<br>reduce dynamic<br>knee instability.   |
| Ineffectiveness of lateral-<br>wedge insoles in improving<br>pain and function in medial<br>knee osteoarthritis: a meta-<br>analysis of controlled<br>randomized trials.         | Zhang J.,<br>Wang Q.,<br>Zhang C. et<br>al. <sup>20</sup>          | 2018 | China             | A total of (n=938)<br>patients were included<br>in the study. (n=478)<br>patients receive LWI<br>and (n=460) receive<br>neutral shoe or no<br>treatment.  | Meta-analysis<br>of controlled<br>randomized<br>trials | It was observed<br>that lateral wedge<br>insoles appear to<br>be ineffective.<br>In attenuating<br>knee pain and<br>functional<br>improvement.  |
| Are wedge inserts an<br>effective treatment option<br>compared to Flat (placebo)<br>inserts: systematic review<br>and meta-analysis.   | Zhang B., Yu<br>X., Liang L.<br>et al. <sup>4</sup>                | 2018 | China             | Out of (n=413)<br>citations, 8 studies met<br>the inclusion criteria.<br>A comparative study<br>was conducted<br>between the use of<br>LWI in intervention<br>and flat or neutral<br>insole in control<br>conditions. | A Systematic<br>Review and<br>Meta-Analysis            | It was found that<br>knee varus angle<br>is reduced in the<br>case of LWI, but<br>LWI is no more<br>efficacious than<br>neutral inserts for<br>improvement of<br>pain and function<br>in patients with<br>knee<br>osteoarthritis. |
| Bio-mechanical effects of<br>lateral and medial wedge<br>insoles on unilateral<br>loading.   | Sawada T.,<br>Kito N.,<br>Yukimune<br>M. et al. <sup>16</sup>      | 2016 | Japan             | Out of (n=30) healthy<br>young patients, (n=18)<br>grouped under normal<br>foot, (n=6) with<br>pronated foot, and<br>(n=6) with a supinated<br>group who were<br>assessed using foot<br>postural index.               | A randomized<br>control trial<br>(RCT).                | The study<br>findings reveal<br>that in both<br>normal and<br>pronated foot<br>groups, there is a<br>significant<br>decrease in knee<br>adduction<br>moment under<br>LWI as compared<br>with the medial<br>wedge insole.          |
| *Can small deviations<br>from lateral wedge insoles<br>lead to significant bio-<br>mechanical changes in<br>patients with knee   | Ferreria V.,<br>Machado L.,<br>Vilaca A. et<br>al. <sup>21</sup>   | 2022 | Portugal          | Out of (n=38), in<br>which patients, (n=15)<br>males, (n=23) females<br>were studied, and 6<br>different lateral wedge  | A randomized<br>control trial<br>(RCT)                 | The study<br>findings reveal a<br>reduction in knee<br>adduction<br>moment under  |

|                             |                      |      | 1       | 1  | 1             |  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------|---------|--|---------------|--|
| osteoarthritis?             |                      |      |         | insoles (0, 2, 4, 6, 8                     |               | control                                    |
|                             |                      |      |         | and 10°) were given to                     |               | conditions and an                          |
|                             |                      |      |         | each patient in a                          |               | increase in ankle                          |
|                             |                      |      |         | randomized order and                       |               | eversion and                               |
|                             |                      |      |         | a control condition                        |               | external knee                              |
|                             |                      |      |         | (shoe with a 0° insole).                   |               | adduction                                  |
|                             |                      |      |         | The study was                              |               | moment in the                              |
|                             |                      |      |         | conducted to see the                       |               | lateral insole:                            |
|                             |                      |      |         | bio-mechanical effect                      |               | hence, even a                              |
|                             |                      |      |         | of different amounts of                    |               | slight change in                           |
|                             |                      |      |         | wedging in medial                          |               | foot induces a                             |
|                             |                      |      |         | osteoarthritis patients.                   |               | significant bio-                           |
|                             |                      |      |         | osicoartinitis patients.                   |               | mechanical                                 |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               |  |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               | change in knee                             |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               | osteoarthritis.                            |
| *Efficacy of lateral wedge  | Kanaujia V.,         | 2020 | India   | A total of 60, patients                    | A randomized  | The study                                  |
| inserts on medial areas of  | Gupta A.,            |      |         | were distributed into                      | control trial | findings reveal                            |
| knee osteoarthritis treated | Kumar D. et          |      |         | two groups: group A                        | (RCT)         | that there was                             |
| with viscous supplements.   | al. <sup>22</sup>    |      |         | (n=30) received                            |               | improvement in                             |
|                             |                      |      |         | Viscosupplements, and                      |               | both groups, bu                            |
|                             |                      |      |         | group B (n=30)                             |               | a significantly                            |
|                             |                      |      |         | received LWI with                          |               | better result is                           |
|                             |                      |      |         | Viscosupplements for                       |               | seen in group E                            |
|                             |                      |      |         | $2^{nd}$ , $4^{th}$ , and $12^{th}$ weeks, |               | in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> |
|                             |                      |      |         | and effectiveness is                       |               | weeks.                                     |
|                             |                      |      |         | compared in terms of                       |               | Group A                                    |
|                             |                      |      |         | pain, function, and                        |               | decreases pain                             |
|                             |                      |      |         | quality of life is                         |               | quality of life                            |
|                             |                      |      |         | assessed.                                  |               | and function and                           |
|                             |                      |      |         | assesseu.                                  |               |  |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               | Group B gives                              |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               | initial relief in                          |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               | stiffness, and                             |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               | function but not                           |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               | in pain and                                |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               | quality of life.                           |
| Efficacy of a lateral wedge | Felson D.T.,         | 2019 | UK      | A total of 83 patients,                    | A randomized  | The study                                  |
| inserts for painful medial  | Parkes M.,           |      |         | were (n=62) were                           | control trial | findings reveal                            |
| knee osteoarthritis.        | Carter S. et         |      |         | included in the study,                     | (RCT)         | that lateral wedge                         |
|                             | al. 23               |      |         | one group (n=31)                           |               | shows a great                              |
|                             |                      |      |         | received LWI and                           |               | reduction in pair                          |
|                             |                      |      |         | other group received                       |               | but not in neutral                         |
|                             |                      |      |         | neutral insole for a                       |               | insole.                                    |
|                             |                      |      |         | period of 8 weeks, with                    |               | moore.                                     |
|                             |                      |      |         |  |               |  |
|                             |                      |      |         | outcome measure of                         |               |  |
|                             |                      |      |         | knee pain (0-10) scale                     |               |  |
|                             |                      |      |         | during past weeks, and                     |               |  |
|                             |                      |      |         | pain was assessed.                         |               |  |
| Knee varus limits the       | Bartsch L.P.,        | 2022 | Germany | A total of 28 patients                     | A randomized  | The study                                  |
| analgesic efficacy of       | Schwarze             |      |         | with medial knee                           | control trial | findings revea                             |
| lateral wedge insoles and   | M., Block J.         |      |         | osteoarthritis, (n=28)                     | (RCT)         | that in both ankle                         |
| ankle foot orthosis in      | et al. <sup>24</sup> |      |         | wore 5mm lateral                           |               | foot orthosis and                          |
| medial knee osteoarthritis. |                      |      |         | wedge insole and ankle                     |               | lateral wedge                              |
|                             |                      |      |         | foot orthosis for a                        |               | insole can be                              |
|                             |                      |      |         | period of 6 weeks and                      |               | uses successfully                          |
|                             |                      | 1    | 1       |  |               |  |
|                             |                      |      |         | nain was correlated                        |               | in reducing noir                           |
|                             |                      |      |         | pain was correlated                        |               |  |
|                             |                      |      |         | with limb alignment                        |               | in reducing pain<br>in medial knee         |
|                             |                      |      |         | ·  |               |  |

#### **Discussion:**

In this article, we review the application of various interventions on footwear modification in patients with knee osteoarthritis, aged between  $\geq$ 40-80 years, on pain, quality of life, functional improvement, knee varus angle, adduction moment, and ground reaction force. Several articles were studied on behalf of this article and are listed below.

Rafiaee M., Karimi M.T., et al. (2012) in his randomized trial predict that the use of 3mm and 7mm LWI had a significant decrease in pain and improved the quality of life in (n=36) MKOA

patients.1

**Barrios J.A., Butler R.J., Crenshaw J.R., et al. (2013)** evaluated (n=38) MKOA patients aged 40-74 years with grade 2 severity for 12 months and observed that in the control group there is an increase in knee adduction moment and frontal plane motion over time, but not in the intervention group.

Parkes M.J., Maricar N., Lunt M., et al. (2013) did not support the use of LWI as a conservative treatment for the management of pain in (n=885) MKOA patients when performed for a period of 2 weeks - 2 years.<sup>19</sup>

Jones R.K., Chapman G.J., Parkes M.J., et al. (2015) estimate (n=70) MKOA patients. He found that EKAM and KAAI reduced during early stance in the control shoe, LWI, and barefoot walking had no effect, but in the case of mobility shoes, there was a significant reduction in EKAM in later stance, and hence therefor LWI shows a reduction in medial loading in knee osteoarthritis.<sup>14</sup>

Sawada T., Kito N., Yukimune M., et al (2016) evaluated (n=30) MKOA patients. He found out that there was a significant decrease in the EKAM under the LWI condition compared to the medial wedge insole. Additionally, knee-ground reaction force and lever arm significantly decreased under the LWI condition compared with the medial wedge insole condition.<sup>16</sup>

Zhang J., Wang Q., Zhang C., et al. (2018) estimated (n=938) MKOA patients, for a period of 6 weeks to 12 months, in his study it was found that LWI appears to be ineffective in altering knee pain and function improvement.<sup>20</sup>

**Zhang B., Yu X., Liang L., et al. (2018)** conducted a study for a period of 2 weeks to 2 years. During this period, he found that knee varus angle is reduced in the case of LWI, but lateral wedges are no more efficacious than neutral inserts for improvement of pain and function in subjects with knee OA.<sup>4</sup>

Felson D.T., Parkes M., Carter S. et al. (2019) estimated (n=83) patients with MKOA for a period of 8 weeks, in this study the researcher found that the use of LWI shows reduction in pain but not in neutral insole.<sup>23</sup>

Kanaujia V., Gupta A., Sharma D.K., et al. (2020) estimated (n==60) patients with MKOA for a period of  $2^{nd}$ ,  $4^{th}$ , and  $12^{th}$  weeks The findings reveal that Viscosupplementation has a significant role in pain, function, and quality of life as compared with LWI, which provides initial relief in stiffness, function, but not on pain and quality of life.<sup>22</sup>

Ferreira V., Machado L., Vilaca A., et al. (2022) evaluated (n=38) MKOA patients between 40-80 years of age with grade 2 and 3 OA, at the end of the study they concluded that even a slight change under the foot induce significant bio-mechanical changes in the knee.<sup>21</sup>

**Bartsch L.P., Schwarze M., Block J., et al. (2022)** estimated (n=28) MKOA patients, found out that there is a correlation between varus misalignment and pain reduction, both LWI and ankle foot orthosis shows reduction in pain wearing for a period of 6 weeks of study.<sup>24</sup>

Ishii Y., Ishikawa M., Kurumadani H., et al. (2023) estimate(n=28) MKOA patients. At the end of the study, he found out that LWI could improve gait variability and reduce dynamic knee instability.<sup>13</sup>

When discussing the efficacy or applicability of various treatments in clinical practice, it's common for scientific communities to have different opinion based on available evidences, but after reviewing several articles on behalf of this article, it had been found that LWI is a effective treatment for patients with MKOA.

#### **Conclusion:**

LWI is a simple and inexpensive method for reducing medial loading of the knee, thus eliminating pain in the osteoarthritic knee. It also reduces peak knee adduction angular impulse, varus angle, and improves quality of life. We recommended various clinical trials on the diversified population of osteoarthritis to assess the benefits of LWI.

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