

*I have been wearing the Walk-Aide since August and had notice an improvement in my gait. I suffer from neuropathy and proprioception problem. The Walk-Aide has not only improved my walking, but it also has provided feedback to where my leg is in space. Initially, I felt it wasn't working and returned to my AFO. After some program tweaking to the device and also allowing for adjustment to the new method of walking, I can happily say it is a success. As with everything in life, you must be committed to making it work. Invest an effort to strengthen your muscles and cover a lot of ground walking. It is not a magic wand, but in time it will allow you to walk with more fluidity. My goal is to be power-walking with a future goal to run! Good Luck! -Julia*

**The WalkAide System by Innovative Neurotronics, Inc.**      [www.walkaide.com](http://www.walkaide.com)

The WalkAide is a medical device that, after more than a decade in development, has received marketing clearance from the FDA for improving walking ability of people experiencing foot drop. Invented by a team of researchers at the University of Alberta, WalkAide uses functional electrical stimulation to restore typical nerve-to-muscle signals in the leg and foot, effectively lifting the foot at the appropriate time. The resulting movement is a smoother, more natural and safer stepping motion. It allows faster walking for longer distances with less fatigue. In fact, many people who try WalkAide experience immediate and substantial improvement in their walking ability, which increases their mobility, functionality, and overall independence.

**About Foot Drop:** Foot Drop is a condition caused by weakness or paralysis of the muscles involved in lifting the front part of the foot, which causes a person to drag the toe of the shoe on the ground or slap the foot on the floor. Foot drop (also called drop foot) can result from peroneal nerve palsy or from damage to the central nervous system such as stroke, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis.

**Clinical results:** A study published in the September 2006 issue of the peer-reviewed journal *Neurorehabilitation and Neural Repair* identifies a trend that suggests traditional rehabilitation is stopped before patients have reached their full potential for recovery. It also suggests the WalkAide can reveal hidden potential for additional patient recovery. At the traditional three month mark, when rehabilitation is typically stopped, the walking speed of patients wearing the WalkAide increased by 15%. With continued usage, patients' walking speed increased by 32% after six months and by nearly 50% after twelve months. The study also showed the number of steps taken per day by WalkAide users increased significantly over the year. WalkAide patients are seeing an increase in mobility months and years after traditional rehabilitation programs have ended, leaving much hope for future improvements.

**Contact information:** If you are a patient or medical professional who lives in the New England area, please contact Rehabilitation Specialist Sarah Rotondo, MSPT for more information (617-640-2377; [srotondo@ininc.us](mailto:srotondo@ininc.us)). If you live outside of the New England area, please contact Jennifer Bittner (301-280-4869; [jbittner@hanger.com](mailto:jbittner@hanger.com)).