

Lesson 5: Helping Patients Improve Balance

This lesson will help you read the Compas software's Balance graph and use it to help patients improve their balance.

The Compas Balance graph provides three major benefits:

- It dynamically displays the the foot's center of pressure as translated from the patient's socket forces.
- It empowers the prosthetist and patient to communicate about balance using visual feedback.
- It helps patients to more quickly improve balance by "seeing" sensations as they affect balance.

For many amputees—especially recent ones and those with limb pain or neuropathy—this information can be invaluable, because they may naturally have difficulty feeling and recognizing how sensations connect to balance.

Accessing the Balance Graph

The Balance Graph, like the Weight Distribution graph explored in Lesson 4, is located on the Standing screen. To reach the Standing screen, begin streaming live data through the Walking screen, then click the Standing tab at the top center of the data window. This will open the Standing screen, which displays the Balance graph.

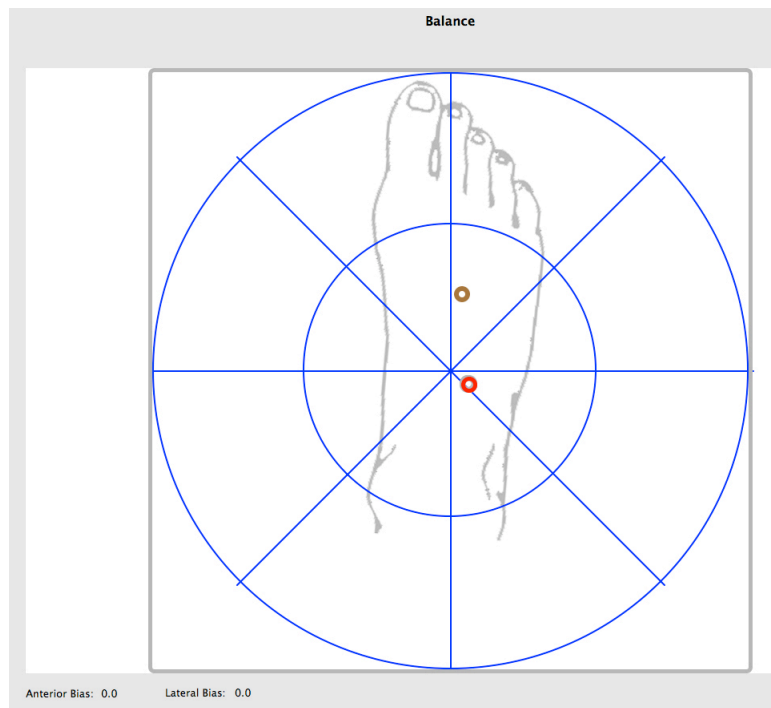
Reading the Balance Graph

The Balance graph is a circular target area with a floating red dot that moves over an illustration of a foot as the patient shifts weight. The dot represents the moving center of pressure on the patient's prosthetic foot, as it relates to the patient's dynamic socket forces. When you click the Snapshot icon to capture the graph's data, a static orange dot appears that marks the relative center of pressure in that moment.

Helping Patients Improve Balance

By watching the dynamic graph while standing, patients can better understand the sensations that shape their balance and thereby improve their balance.

To help your patients train their balance, open the Standing screen, explain to your patient what the graphs mean, then have him or her stand and weight shift while watching the Balance graph. This can help the patient to more quickly recognize which sensations represent stable balance because they can now "see" what they are feeling and connect feeling to balance.



The Balance graph