

# **Shore Prosthetics & Orthotics LLC**

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## **Orthosis Follow-up Care and Instructions**

### **New or Replacement Devices:**

Once your device is complete, Jon Yanke, CPO will set up a recheck appointment within 14 days to monitor the fit and function of your device. We want to be sure that your device continues to fit appropriately and that it remains in good condition. If we find anatomical changes or changes in your functional ability, we will adjust the device and/or recommend changes to the device.

When you receive your finished orthosis, you will get verbal and written instructions for the care and use of your device. If you need a refresher, or misplaced your instruction sheet, you can view and print the care and use Instructions that follow. Remember that these are just guidelines—call our office with any additional questions.

### **Follow-up Care Beyond the Initial Recheck Period:**

Beyond the 90-day recheck period, regular follow-up appointments are necessary to identify changes in your anatomy or condition before they cause a problem. If we find anatomical changes or changes in your functional ability, we will adjust the device and/or recommend changes to the device. We recommend that you return at least every six months for follow-up care, or sooner if you notice changes in your weight or activity level. Your clinician will let you know if your device requires more frequent follow-up care or specific maintenance. Some major adjustments or replacements require a doctor's evaluation and prescription. Jon Yanke, CPO will let you know if you need to contact your doctor before your device is adjusted or parts are replaced.

## Orthosis Wearing Schedule

It is important to allow you to accommodate to your new orthosis. A gradual increase in your wearing time can make the difference between a comfortable and painful transition.

Here is a guideline:

	AM	PM
• Day 1	1/2 hr	1/2 hr
• Day 2	1 hr	1 hr
• Day 3	1 1/2 hr	1 1/2 hr
• Etc.	+1/2 hr	+1/2 hr

Most importantly, use common sense!!

### Check your skin every time you take off your orthosis:

- Check with your eyes and your hands. (Especially if you have altered sensation from a neuropathy, poor circulation, or diabetes).
- If you check it every time, you should never get blisters.
- If your skin is broken, do not wear the orthosis until it is completely healed.

### Do you hurt?

- Do not wear it if it is painful or if it causes moderate to severe discomfort.
- Remove the orthosis if it causes pain, check that it is properly positioned and in the correct shoe.
- Consider your wearing schedule: did you wear it too long?

### Is your skin reddened?

- Does it "blanche" (turn white) after you press on it? If it does blanche, continue to progress in your wearing schedule.
- Does the redness go away within 20 minutes without the orthosis on? If the redness does not resolve within 20 minutes, cut down on your wearing schedule. If the redness continues, stop wearing the orthosis and call Jon Yanke, CPO for an adjustment.

## Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO)

### *Care and Use Instructions*

This orthosis is designed to meet your specific needs to control your ankle and foot.

The ankle area may have joints that move or it may not. The types of joints were chosen by your physician and/or orthotist for your specific condition.

## **APPLYING YOUR ORTHOSIS**

1. When putting your orthosis on, apply a long, clean sock that extends at least to the top of the orthosis.

This acts as a barrier between the skin and the orthosis and also helps absorb perspiration.

2. While in a seated position, carefully apply the AFO. Fasten all straps.

3. Make sure that your foot is firmly seated in the shoe or heel cup of the orthosis.

4. **Never wear your plastic AFO without the shoe.**

5. If you are receiving physical therapy or have a care giver please show them these instructions.

## **WEARING INSTRUCTIONS AND PRECAUTIONS**

1. You should have a “break-in” period in order for your skin to gradually get used to the orthosis. You should gradually increase the amount of time that you are wearing the orthosis each day. Your orthotist may give you a specific schedule.

2. Whenever the orthosis and sock are removed, check the skin under it carefully for any redness, blistering or other signs of irritation. This is particularly important if you lack sensation. Any redness should go away in about 30 minutes. Leave the orthosis off until the red spot goes away.

3. After the “break in” period, you should inspect your skin at the end of each day.

4. Discontinue usage of your orthosis and call Jon Yanke, CPO if you notice any substantial problems such

as:

- Unusual swelling
- Pain or other change in feeling or function of the leg, ankle or foot
- Pressure areas (red spots that don't go away in 30 to 45 minutes)
- Broken or missing parts

## **TAKING CARE OF YOUR ORTHOSIS**

1. A metal and leather orthosis may be cleaned with mild soap and water. To clean the leather, you may

use saddle soap and water.

2. To clean a plastic orthosis use just a mild soap and water.

3. Do not expose your orthosis to open flames or too high-temperature environments (i.e. don't leave it in a closed car on a hot, sunny day).

4. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call your orthotist.

## **Body Jacket (TLSO)**

### *Care and Use Instructions*

The body jacket is one type of thoracolumbosacral orthosis (TLSO). This orthosis is used to stabilize and/or protect your spine.

## **APPLYING YOUR ORTHOSIS**

1. Identify the back half of the TLSO and find which end is “up.” This will usually be labeled.
2. Lying on a flat bed, log roll to one side. Have someone assist you by sliding the side edge of the back half of the orthosis underneath the side of your body. Be sure that the indentations on each side of the TLSO line up with your anatomical waistline.
3. Roll onto your back, lying on the back half of the orthosis. Check to make sure the orthosis is centered under your body with the indentations properly positioned at the waist.
4. Lay the front half of the TLSO on the front of your body overlapping the back half. Be sure to align the grooves. Fasten the Velcro straps so that the orthosis is snug. This will prevent the orthosis from shifting on your body.

## **WEARING INSTRUCTIONS AND PRECAUTIONS**

1. Always wear a clean T-shirt under the orthosis. This provides a barrier between the skin and the plastic as well as absorbing perspiration. Be sure that the T-shirt fits snugly and that it has a “tail” long enough to extend beyond the lower edge of the orthosis. Care should be taken pull out the wrinkles in the T-shirt after putting on the orthosis. Cotton/poly-blend, silk, polypropylene, or CoolMax™ T-shirts are suggested for undergarments. These wick moisture away from your body.

Ask your orthotist for a recommendation.

2. If possible, it is recommended to gradually get used to your new orthosis. Initially wear it for a short period of time and *only* take it off with permission from your physician. Gradually increase the wearing time as tolerated, until the recommended wearing schedule as prescribed by your doctor is achieved. **IF YOU HAVE HAD A TRAUMATIC INJURY, THIS WEANING PROCESS MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE. THE ORTHOSIS MAY NEED TO BE WORN FULL TIME BEGINNING IMMEDIATELY.**

3. Don't expect to be able to move in all directions or sit in all types of chairs. Patients who otherwise have had no problems with their TLSO, may find it uncomfortable when riding in an automobile due to the softness and angle of the seat.

4. Each time the orthosis is removed check for any redness and skin irritation. Expect to see redness in high pressure areas such as waistline and under any pads. Red marks should disappear within 30 to 45 minutes after removing the orthosis.

## **SKIN CARE**

It is very important to PREVENT SKIN BREAKDOWN (sore, red, raw skin). The skin under the orthosis needs to be toughened up, especially where the orthosis presses the hardest.

### **To Protect the Skin:**

1. Bathe daily (bath or shower)
2. Apply rubbing alcohol with your hands to all parts of the skin that the orthosis covers, especially the areas where the skin is pink, and the areas where the orthosis presses. Simply rub the alcohol into the skin. The alcohol plus the friction between your hand and body toughens the

skin.

3. Always wear a clean undergarment or tubular knit without side seams, if possible. See note on previous page regarding T-shirt material.

4. Initially, **DO NOT USE CREAM, LOTION OR POWDER** under the orthosis. When dry skin occurs, call your health care practitioner.

5. If you wear the orthosis loosely, it will move around and cause more skin problems by rubbing.

**WEAR YOUR ORTHOSIS AS TIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE.**

6. If there is skin breakdown (sore, red, raw skin) the orthosis must not be worn until the skin heals --possibly a few days. If this happens, call your orthotist. The problem may be solved over the phone.

Sometimes the skin over the waist and hips gets darker. That is common and is not a problem. When the orthosis treatment is over, this color will return to normal.

## **TAKING CARE OF YOUR ORTHOSIS**

1. Beware of where you store the orthosis when you are not wearing it. It is constructed of a thermoplastic and *can be damaged by extreme heat*.

2. The orthosis should be cleaned every day with a mild soap and water. It may also be wiped with alcohol. Do not put the orthosis back on until it is fully dry.

3. If you shower with the orthosis on, the orthosis should be removed and dried as soon as is possible.

(Any time the orthosis is off, you should be lying still on your back in bed)

4. Changes in the patient's size cause the orthosis to fit differently. If you feel your orthosis needs an adjustment, call Jon Yanke, CPO.