

Rebound

ORTHOTICS & PROSTHETICS

ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSIS (AFO) WEAR & CARE INSTRUCTIONS

During your AFO fitting, your orthotist will guide you on how to properly wear and use the orthosis for maximum effectiveness. Some points to remember:

APPLICATION

Instructions specific to your AFO will be discussed at the appointment. The following is a generalized summary of how to properly apply your brace:

- **Socks:**
Make sure to wear a proper sock when using your AFO. The sock should cover all the skin that comes into contact with the brace, as it will help absorb perspiration and protect your skin. A long sock that can fold back over the top of the AFO is ideal. Before putting on the AFO, smooth out any sock wrinkles, as they can cause skin irritation or breakdown over time.
- **Brace:**
Slide the foot into the AFO by "scooping" it from behind, ensuring that the foot is properly positioned with the heel fully seated at the bottom of the AFO. This is essential for the brace to function correctly.
- **Straps:**
If your AFO has an ankle strap, tighten it first to hold your heel and foot securely inside the brace. Then fasten the calf strap (if applicable). Continue to fasten all other straps as necessary.
- **Shoes:**
 - **Never** attempt to use your orthosis without a shoe.
 - Once the brace is secured, put on your shoes. While a special shoe isn't necessary to accommodate the AFO, it's helpful to remove the existing inlay and loosen the laces to reduce pressure and create more room. For tighter shoes, using a **shoehorn** can make it easier to put on.
 - You may need a shoe that is one size larger or wider to comfortably fit with the AFO.
 - Remember, on hard surfaces, plastic braces can become slippery if worn without shoes, so it's always recommended to wear a shoe with your AFO to prevent any slipping hazards.

SELF EXAMINATION

Always remove your shoes, socks, and brace and perform a thorough visual inspection of your entire foot and lower leg, at least once a day. This step is essential, as you can't rely solely on feeling alone to detect potential issues, especially if you have reduced sensation. Regularly checking for any redness, sores, or irritation will help catch problems early and prevent further complications.

WEAR SCHEDULE

DAY 1 — 1 to 2 HOURS

Start by wearing the orthosis for 1 to 2 hours. After one hour, remove it and check your skin. You may notice light red marks, which should fade or disappear within 20-30 minutes. This mild redness is common in areas like the arch, instep, and bony areas of the foot/ankle. If the redness persists beyond 30 minutes, or if you see any blistering or bruising, do not put the orthosis back on. Contact your orthotist to schedule an appointment for adjustment.

DAY 2 — 2 to 3 HOURS

Wear the orthosis for an additional hour compared to the previous day. Once again, check your skin for any signs of irritation or redness.

ADD 1 HOUR EACH DAY UNTIL FULL-TIME WEAR IS ACHIEVED — USUALLY TAKES 2 WEEKS

Gradually increase the wear time by about one hour each day. Typically, it takes 7-10 days to break in the

AFO and wear it comfortably throughout the entire day. Keep monitoring your skin regularly for any areas of concern.

MAINTENANCE:

- Inspect your AFO daily for any signs of cracking, separation, or reduced effectiveness. Do not attempt to modify the orthosis on your own. If you notice any issues, contact your orthotist to schedule an appointment for a professional evaluation and adjustment.
- To clean your AFO, wipe it down with a damp cloth and mild soap. For removing any residue from the plastic, you can use rubbing alcohol. It's also recommended to clean the foam liners with isopropyl alcohol. Do not submerge the AFO in water, as it could damage the metal fasteners and straps. If your AFO has velcro padding, handwash them and let the air dry before use.
- Allow the orthosis to air dry and ensure the device is fully dry before wearing it to avoid any skin irritation or discomfort.
- Keep the AFO away from excessive heat to prevent damage to the plastic components.
- Changes in weight, activity, overall health, or growth can affect the fit of your AFO. Visit with your orthotist on a regular basis to see if adjustments are needed.

If you have questions or concerns about your diabetic shoes or orthotic inserts, please contact your orthotist.

Notes:

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