



## **LOWER EXTREMITY ORTHOSES (Ankle Foot Orthosis, Knee-Ankle-Foot Orthosis)**

While being fit with your new AFO (ankle foot orthosis) or KAFO (knee ankle foot orthosis) your Orthotist will instruct you on how to care for and break in your new orthosis.

### **STOCKINGS**

Make sure to have proper stockings, wear clean cotton or diabetic stockings. Stockings should extend higher than the orthosis. Make sure to smooth out all wrinkles, they can cause irritation or breakdown over time.

### **SHOES**

Use the shoe horn every time you put on your shoes. This will prevent the heel counters from breaking down. You may need to purchase a new pair of shoes to accommodate for the size of the orthosis.

### **WEARING**

Now that you have your custom orthosis, how do you put it on?

Donning is the act of “putting on”. These are two recommended methods:

1. **Donn the orthosis first**, tighten all straps making sure your heel is “seated” fully into the orthosis. Shoes can now be donned. You may find it helpful to loosen the shoe opening as much as possible and to use a shoehorn.
2. OR you may slip the **orthosis into the shoe first**. Using your orthosis as a shoehorn, slide the foot fully into the orthosis and shoe. Tighten all straps as necessary. The shoe closure needs to be tight enough to ensure the foot does not move around inside the shoe.

### **WEARING SCHEDULE**

**NEVER ATTEMPT TO USE YOUR ORTHOSIS WITHOUT A SHOE!!!** as you may easily slip, fall or break the orthosis or cause personal injury.

#### **DAY 1-----1 HOUR**

After wearing your custom-made orthosis for one hour, remove the shoe, orthosis and stocking. Look at the skin on foot and leg (sides, top, bottom, back of heels, and legs). Use a mirror if you have trouble seeing the backs and bottoms of your leg and foot. If you see red marks, this means pressure. Check the time it takes for the marks to disappear. **These marks should disappear within 30 minutes**, if the marks persist, discontinue wear and contact your Orthotist.

#### **DAY 2-----2 HOURS**

After wearing your orthosis for two hours, remove the shoe, orthosis and stocking. Look at the skin on foot and leg (sides, top, bottom, back of heels, and legs). Use a mirror if you have trouble seeing the



## **LOWER EXTREMITY ORTHOSES CONTINUED...**

backs and bottoms of your leg and foot. If you see red marks, this means pressure. Check the time it takes for the marks to disappear. These marks should disappear within 30 minutes, if the marks persist discontinue wear and contact your Orthotist.

**ADD 1 HOUR EACH DAY UNTIL FULL TIME WEAR IS ACHIEVED GENERALLY IT TAKES 2 WEEKS.**

Adhere to the wear schedule. Remember your leg and foot need time to adapt to the new pressures and demands being placed on them by the new orthosis. The goal is to break in the orthosis without breaking down you! Problems may develop due to daily fluctuations in size and volume.

### **MAINTAINANCE**

- Do not attempt to modify or adjust the orthosis on your own. Inspect the orthosis daily for cracking, loose or worn parts. Contact your orthotist for an appointment for any modifications or concerns.
- You may wipe down the orthosis with a damp cloth to clean it. Use a mild soap and warm water only. The orthosis should be completely dry before using it.
- Change in weight, activity, overall health or growth may cause your orthosis to fit unsatisfactorily. Visit with your physician or orthotist on a regular basis to see if any changes are necessary.

**If you have questions or concerns about your orthosis, please contact your Orthotist.**