

Patient Information

## Physiotherapy

# Aspen Spinal Brace

### Introduction

Spinal braces are used to prevent spinal movement after events such as spinal surgery or trauma. The brace provides extra stability and minimises further damage, and it allows you to sit and/or walk.

It is essential to wear this brace every time you are getting up or out of bed.

It is essential that you follow the application and removal instructions in this leaflet.



## Patient Information

### Putting the brace on – this is always done whilst lying flat on your back in bed.

- **Step 1**

Make sure the shoulder straps are unclipped, the tightening cords are loosened and the waist band is undone. You should be lying flat on the bed (unless otherwise advised). Roll onto your right hand side.

- **Step 2**

The waist band is slid under your right side by your assistant. The back part of the brace needs to be aligned along your spine.



- **Step 3**

The brace should be held in place by your assistant whilst you roll onto your back.



## Patient Information

- **Step 4**

Your assistant should position the breastplate in the centre of your chest and the top of the breast plate is located just under the collarbone.



- **Step 5**

Your assistant should tighten the waist band of the brace and fasten the waist belt with the overlapping Velcro at the front of the brace.



## Patient Information

- **Step 6**

Your assistant takes hold of the tightening cords and firmly pulls them to bring the side and back panels tighter together around your waist. Your assistant sticks the tightening cord loops to the waist band of the brace. Ensure the brace is not slack, but you are able to draw a big breath comfortably.



- **Step 7**

You can now roll onto your side and bring yourself up to a seated position.

- **Step 8**

Your assistant should fasten the shoulder straps positioned as advised by the orthotist or physiotherapist. Pull the shoulder straps cord to tighten and achieve a snug but comfortable fit.



## Patient Information

### **Taking the brace off – this is always done whilst lying flat on your back in bed.**

- **Step 1**

You should be lying flat on the bed. Unclip the shoulder straps.

- **Step 2**

Your assistant should release the tightening cords and allow the side and back plates to loosen. Make sure to stick the tightening cord loops to the waist band in a loose position.

- **Step 3**

Your assistant should undo the Velcro belt at the front and allow you to roll to your right. Try to keep your hip and shoulders in alignment when rolling.

- **Step 4**

You should try to maintain a straight spine on your side whilst the brace is pulled out from under your waist.

### **Further information**

- The brace should be used all the time when sat up or standing/walking for the period advised by the doctor.
- The brace should be worn over thin clothing such as a t-shirt. You should avoid clothing with buttons or jewellery that would be pressed against the body by the brace.
- Skin checks should be carried out daily by a family member. If there is an area of skin found to be broken, please get it reviewed by a GP practice nurse who may advise you to contact the Surgical Appliances Department for review (024 7696 6035).
- The brace can be cleaned by wiping it over with a damp cloth and leaving it to dry.
- The brace is not to be worn when showering. A strip wash of the upper half of the body in bed is required.
- Do not adjust the brace settings. If you feel adjustments are required please contact the Surgical Appliances Department (024 7696 6035).

## Patient Information

- If the brace is riding up on movement, it is likely that it has not been applied tightly enough. If so return to the start position on the bed, adjust and tighten as shown in the instructions previously.
- If any positioning adjustments are required, return the individual to the start position (lying in bed) and refit the brace. Do not undo and/or adjust in a sitting / standing position.
- These spinal braces are for individual patient use and should therefore be disposed of as clinical waste once no longer required by the individual.

**If you have any issues or concerns, please contact the Surgical Appliance/Orthotics department at UHCW on 024 7696 6035 or email: [OrthoticsQueries@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:OrthoticsQueries@uhcw.nhs.uk).**

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