

Orthotics

A Guide to your Spinal Orthosis

Introduction

You have been provided with a spinal orthosis which has been designed to meet your individual needs. These are also known as back supports or back braces.

A spinal orthosis is provided to compensate for muscle weakness, paralysis or skeletal problems which cause spinal instability.

Your spinal brace will aim to:

- Control joint instability
- Prevent excessive joint motion
- Improve joint alignment
- Reduce joint pain

The designs of the spinal orthosis can vary to suit each individual. There are three main types:

- Rigid devices with plastic or metal sections or supports
- Fabric devices
- A combination of rigid and fabric sections

Spinal supports use abdominal compression to stabilise and protect the spine therefore they need to be a secure fit. As a result, your spinal orthosis may be uncomfortable to wear in the initial stages.



Patient Information

Wear Time

You should gradually increase the wear time of your spinal brace. This will allow your skin to adjust to the supportive pressures which the brace applies. Begin by using your spinal orthosis in a familiar, indoor environment. If your spinal orthosis becomes uncomfortable or painful then seek advice from the Orthotics department on 02476 966035.

Suggested wear time:

- Days 1-3 30 minutes -1 hour
- Days 3-5 1-2 hours
- Days 5-7 2-4 hours
- Day 7+ As required

If your spinal brace becomes uncomfortable and painful stop wearing the brace and contact the Orthotics department for advice.

Skin care

It is advised to wear a thin cotton t-shirt or vest between your skin and the device, this will help to take away moisture from your skin and keep the skin and the device hygienic and minimise heat build-up.

Unless you have been instructed by a doctor **not** to remove the brace you should check your skin for any signs of marking or redness each time you remove it. If red marks persist for longer than 30 minutes or if the skin breaks down or blisters, stop using the spinal brace and contact the orthotics department.

It is particularly important to check your skin daily if you have reduced sensation.

There is always a risk of pressure and rubbing when wearing a spinal brace.

Caring for your device

- You can clean your spinal orthosis with a damp cloth and dry with a towel. Do not dry over sources of heat as this may deform the plastic.

Patient Information

- Each time you use your device, check the strap connections and material for wear and tear.
- Do not attempt repairs yourself. Contact the Orthotics department for review.
- Straps and padding will wear with use. You can arrange repairs with the Orthotics department.

Putting on your spinal orthosis

It is possible to put your brace on when standing, sitting or lying down. Your Orthotist will advise you on the best way to put your brace on.

Generally it is easier to position and fasten the brace when lying down. This will allow you to use both hands to fasten the straps and other fastenings.

Ensure all straps on your spinal brace are fastened securely.

Review

Following fitting of your spinal brace, your Orthotist may schedule a review appointment to discuss your progress, check for wear and tear and carry out any necessary adjustments.

However this is not always the case, if you feel the brace is not comfortable or your needs have changed, please contact the orthotics department for a review appointment.

Contact Details

Coventry

Surgical Appliances Department

University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire

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Coventry

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Telephone number: 02476 966035

Patient Information

Opening Times

Monday–Thursday: 08:30–16:30

Friday 08:00–16:00

Closed Bank Holidays

Rugby

Surgical Appliances Department

Rugby St Cross Hospital

Barby Road

Rugby

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Opening Times

Monday–Wednesday: 08.30–16.30

Closed Bank Holidays

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6035 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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Document History

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