PLASTIC ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSIS (AFO) & KNEE ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSIS (KAFO) PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS

Your new orthotic device was designed to support and protect against specific instability. No brace can provide absolute protection. Proper fit, maintenance and use are critical to provide desired function. The following suggestions will help maximize comfort and brace performance.

1. Device should be worn as securely as comfortable to support, but not limit circulation.

2. Some type of long sock may be more comfortable between your skin and device.

3. Wear a well fitting enclosed oxford or athletic shoe.

4. Changing to different shoes MAY affect brace function and fit. Remember that the heel height of your shoe can affect the fit and function of your AFO/KAFO. Your orthosis was designed to go with shoes of a particular heel height. Using a shoe with a higher heel height will cause the orthosis to lean forward (similar to a downhill ski boot). Conversely, a lower heel height shoe will cause your orthosis to lean backward. If you buy new shoes try the orthosis on at the same time to ensure proper fit and function. If the shoe change makes your walking feel unusual, it could mean the heel height is slightly different. If the heel height is lower, a wedge may be needed inside the shoe to correct the problem. If the heel height of the shoe is too high, there may be no solution short of a new brace design for the higher heel height shoe (this is usually cost prohibitive). If you are unsure if your new footwear is appropriate to wear with your orthosis, contact your orthotist for an appointment to evaluate and explain which footwear is appropriate.

5. Inspect foot, ankle, and all bony areas on leg frequently for pressure areas.

6. Any frayed or torn straps, loose hinges or hardware should be repaired by a qualified orthotist.

7. Plastic AFO’s and KAFO’s and their foam liners may be cleaned with mild soap (such as Ivory or antibacterial soap) and rinsed thoroughly with water.

8. Keep plastic items away from prolonged areas of intense heat (inside a hot car).

9. Any lubrication of mechanical joints should be done with teflon or silicone spray.

With all procedures, follow-up care is of the utmost importance. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the patient to contact our office to arrange a follow-up visit. This is included in the initial fee. Hospital patients should call our office to schedule a follow-up appointment upon their discharge. It is also the responsibility of the patient to inform the orthotist/prosthetist of any fatigue points in the orthoses/prostheses, whether they are metallic, plastic, fabric, or material such as straps. Contact: Northern Care, Inc (406) 755-6322.
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WEARING / CARE INSTRUCTIONS

1 Wearing schedule should be determined by your doctor and/or practitioner.

Start with a use period of __1__ hour the first time Lengthen the period of use to __2__ hours the second time Continue increasing the period of use by 2 hours each time until usage is as prescribed.

a) Gradually increase your wearing tolerance during the break-in period as indicated by your Orthotist The normal break-in period is 7 - 10 days.

b) Each time the orthosis is removed during the break-in period, check for redness in places where the AFO/KAFO comes in contact with the foot or leg.

- Remove the AFO/KAFO every 2-4 hours for the first few days If any part of the leg or foot shows signs of redness keep orthosis off for half an hour Usually the redness disappears in 20 minutes.
- Area's that repeatedly seem to get red - this may give you a clue as to whether the AFO/KAFO is too tight.
- If blisters or abrasions occur, discontinue use and consult your Orthotist.
- With decreased sensation in lower extremity, check the condition of skin more frequently.

2. Continuous monitoring is recommended to ascertain that no irritation is experienced If you experience discomfort, remove the brace and check for redness The redness should disappear in 20 minutes If the redness persists for more than 20 minutes, discontinue use and call for an appointment The brace may be too tight and may need to be adjusted Do not hesitate to call our office for adjustments or with any questions you may have.

FOLLOW UP

Your orthosis should be re-checked 10-14 days after your first fitting It should be re-checked every six months thereafter If any problems develop, do not wait for a six month check up -- call our office immediately!

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(Rev AFO & KAFO 2/22/16)