

# About Your New AFO (Ankle Foot Orthosis)

## The Orthotic & Prosthetic Centers

Your new AFO will help you heal faster by properly positioning your foot and ankle, supporting your muscles and immobilizing or correcting the surrounding joints. The information below – along with the specific guidance of your physician and orthotist – will help you properly maintain and use the orthosis for best effect.

### **Wearing your AFO**

If your AFO has a plastic ankle and foot section, you must wear a fastening (lace-up or Velcro®) shoe that is roomy enough to accommodate your foot and the brace comfortably. If you are fitting the orthosis with an existing shoe or sneaker remove the original insert from inside the shoe or sneaker to accommodate more room before putting it on over the AFO.

Always wear a cotton sock that extends beyond the top of the brace between your skin and the brace. This absorbs perspiration and protects your skin.

Don't be concerned if your brace feels awkward at first. You will feel more comfortable with it over a few weeks. Here's how to get started:

- Wear your brace for half an hour at a time inside your home, then take it off and rest your leg.
- Continue this practice over the next few days, alternately wearing the brace and resting your leg. Gradually increase your wearing time.
- Check your skin for red spots. If the redness does not fade after 20 minutes, call your orthotist. This is especially important if you are diabetic or have poor sensation in your leg.

### **Initial wearing schedule**

- Days 1-3:** Wear your AFO for 1/2 hour, 3 – 4 times a day
- Days 4-6:** Wear your AFO for 1 hour, 3 – 4 times a day
- Days 7-10:** Wear your AFO for 1-1/2 hour, 3 – 4 times a day
- Days 11-14:** Wear your AFO full time or according to your physician's suggestion

### **Maintaining Your AFO**

Once a week or more, clean any plastic surfaces of your brace by wiping it with rubbing alcohol. Does your brace have metal joints? If so, lubricate them every few weeks with a lubricant your orthotist can suggest.

(More On Reverse Side)

Please contact us if you have any questions.

#### **Boston**

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Biewend Building, Level B  
Boston, MA 02116  
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#### **Braintree**

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**800 634 0606**  
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## Risks and Precautions

Check your skin daily for red or discolored spots, blisters, soreness, or swelling. If you see any such symptoms, call our office and stop wearing your AFO immediately.

DO NOT try to adjust, repair, or alter your brace in any way. The safety and effectiveness of your AFO depends upon the careful fitting, design and fabrication by a team of experts. Leave any adjustments to a qualified medical professional.

## Follow-up care and emergencies

Follow-up visits with your fitter are vital for your healing – don't skip any scheduled appointments. Call our office with any questions or problems. For medical emergencies, call 911 or your local hospital.

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