

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Ankle foot orthosis (AFO) - adult

This leaflet is for patients supplied with an ankle foot orthosis (AFO) that controls the position of the foot and/or ankle. An AFO, also known as a cosmetic AFO, is a close-fitting plastic support that goes into the shoe. This leaflet should be used as a general guide along with the specific advice provided by your orthotist.

Fitting instructions

Sitting on a firm surface, hold the top of the brace, flex your knee and slide your heel down into the support so that good contact with the base is made. Ensure your heel is firmly down before fastening the ankle strap, then proceed with the calf strap. Lastly, work your shoe on and be sure you tie it securely.

It is recommended that you wear long socks. Plain cotton socks are ideal, with no pattern. Be sure to fasten the straps securely but not overly tight.

A low chair or bed will help when applying the orthosis.

Wearing regime

Wearing your orthosis should not hurt but you may feel a little uncomfortable while you get used to it.

Whether this is your first or a replacement, you should build up the wearing time gradually.

Only wear indoors for the first week so that you are in familiar surroundings.

If possible wear for short periods, but often throughout the day.

After about two weeks, wear every day whether indoors or out.

Any rubs or red marks should fade away after 15 minutes of removing the orthosis. If they do not fade please contact the Orthotic Department for a review appointment and leave the orthosis off if safe to do so.

Do not drive whilst wearing your orthosis unless you have contacted your insurance company. You may find your insurance is invalid if you drive with the orthosis on.

Maintenance

Due to the intimate fit of the AFO, it is very difficult to keep it absolutely clean. Never immerse in water. Plastic and foam components can be cleaned with a warm, soapy cloth and dried. Leather components should not be cleaned.

Allow to air dry if the orthosis becomes wet and do not wear until dry. Do not place on or near a heat source. Moving metal components can be kept lubricated and rust free using WD40, or a small amount of mechanic's grease or oil. Do not get these lubricants on other components.

Do not attempt to alter, cut or modify your orthosis in any way. If the orthosis needs repairing, place in a bag with your details and take to the Orthotic Department for servicing.

If you are experiencing any problems with the orthosis, please contact the Orthotic Department. If you find your orthosis does not help within six weeks of wearing it, please contact the orthotic department and your referrer.

All adult regular users should be supplied with two orthoses that are functional and are in reasonable condition. The Trust will not replace AFOs on a regular basis, only at the discretion of the orthotist. Children are issued with one orthosis which will be replaced as they grow.

Please keep this leaflet safe for future use. You are now able to contact the department directly for orthotic care as required. If you need a review appointment, or if the orthosis requires servicing or replacement, you **do not** need to be referred again.

If there are new symptom(s)/condition(s) that are unrelated, a new referral will be required to be assessed for further orthotic management.

Contact details

Orthotics Department
Clinic 2
King's Treatment Centre
King's Mill Hospital
Sutton in Ashfield
Notts
NG17 4JL

Clinics are held at:

- Clinic 2, Kings Treatment Centre
- General Outpatients, Newark Hospital
- Neuro Rehabilitation, Mansfield Community Hospital

The contact telephone number for **all** orthotic queries is 01623 676163.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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