

GREAT LAKES ORTHOPEDIC LABS, INC.
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GREAT LAKES ORTHOPEDIC LABS, INC.
219 Bryant Street, Buffalo, NY 14222
Telephone No. (716) 878-7307

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WEARING ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSES (“AFOS”)

1. Always wear socks of appropriate thickness over the skin. A cotton-synthetic blend of medium thickness is recommended. Smooth out any wrinkles or bagginess in the socks.
2. Bend the knee and hip to about 90 degrees to help reduce the stretch of the ankle muscles. If spasticity is present, allow extra time to obtain this position.
3. Work the heel into the back of the brace by holding the forefoot, bending the forefoot slightly upwards, and pushing the top of the foot back into the heel section of the brace.
4. Hold the heel in the brace and securely tighten the heel section of the brace.
5. If the patient’s foot has moved while the straps were being secured, the brace may be too loose for optimal foot control. If so, release the straps and repeat steps 2 - 4

CAUTION: If the ankle foot orthosis has a hinged ankle, keep your fingers away from the back of the brace above the heel to prevent pinching them between the calf and foot sections.

CARE OF ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSES (“AFOS”)

1. Clean the brace with a sponge or soft brush with mild soap (skin safe) and warm water. Towel dry, then allow a few hours for thorough air drying. Do not dry with heat.
2. Always wear sneakers or shoes to prevent scoring and scratching the bottom of the AFO. Not wearing a sneaker or shoe over the brace will void the warranty.
3. Avoid extremes of cold and heat. In cold temperatures, the plastic will become brittle and prone to stress fractures. Avoid suddenly prying the brace open when it is very cold.

CAUTION: When not wearing the device, keep it away from your pets since they are attracted to the human scent and will chew and destroy it.

THINGS TO WATCH FOR

After an initial 2 or 3 week period of intermittent wear, patients adapt quickly to wearing braces full time. Any complaints of discomfort, especially after the patient has been wearing braces comfortably for a while, may signal a need for adjustment of the brace. Some redness, especially under the ankle strap, is common due to the amount of muscle tone being controlled by the brace. Any red mark or sign of irritation that does not go away within 20 minutes after the brace has been removed may indicate a fit problem requiring action. Also, after three to six months, braces should be evaluated to ensure proper fit.

If you have fitting problems or need to schedule an evaluation, please call our office for an appointment. If you need immediate assistance after regular office hours, please call 893-4116 and leave a message on the answering machine. Your call will be returned.

FINDING SHOES

Generally, a shoe that is wider in the toe area, perhaps a size or two larger than normal, will best fit a brace. Finding the shortest shoe that can accommodate the brace is recommended. This will reduce the tendency for the wearer to trip over the toes. A more flexible shoe material will spread more to accommodate the extra width required. We recommend the padded insole of the shoe be removed after purchase to provide an additional increase in volume. The following websites contain information on shoes designed specifically for use with ankle foot orthoses: www.keepingpace.com, www.hatchbacksfootwear.com, and www.markellshoe.com.

Warranty: The components of this device are warranted for 90 days, after which a service charge, based on an hourly rate and materials, can be applied. The warranty does not apply to anatomical changes of the patient, misuse and/or loss of the device or any alterations made by anyone other than Great Lakes.