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Cascade DAFO

Habituation

A DAFO® (Dynamic Ankle-Foot Orthosis) is designed to change the position of the patient's foot during normal daily life. The more involved and less mobile the foot, the more "pushing" the brace must do to hold the new foot position. The wrap around design is excellent at keeping this pressure spread out over large areas. Cascade recommends an initial break-in period to allow the skin to toughen up slightly. The foot will also begin to relax in its new position through a decrease in total pressure.

The following are some guidelines to follow for successful DAFO use:

1. Initial wearing time of one hour increments will allow monitoring for problems.
2. Increase wearing time by one hour per day (barring complications). This will allow for quick accommodation.
3. The new foot position provided by the brace will require the patient to acquire new balancing skills. Expect a learning curve.
4. The first week or two may be a time of less balance and more fatigue and irritability.
5. Extra therapy time during the break-in period can be useful.
6. Children's experiences will vary. Some will find immediate improvement.
7. As the foot adapts and skills improve, the DAFO may need to be adjusted.
8. If function does not improve after a week of wearing, it could indicate a need for adjustment or modification to the brace.
9. Parents and practitioners: have patience!

After an initial break-in period of intermittent wearing for the first 2 or 3 weeks, children adapt quickly to wearing braces full time. Any complaints of discomfort, especially after the child has been wearing braces comfortably for a while, may signal a need for adjustment of the brace or that the child has outgrown 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. Be sure to inform your practitioner if this happens.

Care

Cascade DAFO®s are made from a variety of plastics, depending on the chosen brace style. They are thin and flexible, yet durable under normal wear. DAFOs should be worn with shoes for walking on hard surfaces or outside. Scoring or heavy scratching, especially on the bottom, may lead to stress fractures in the plastic. Not wearing a shoe over the brace, excluding therapy time, will void the warranty.

Clean the DAFOs using a sponge or soft brush with mild soap and warm water. Towel dry, then allow a few hours for thorough air drying. Do not dry with heat. In cold temperatures, DAFOs may become brittle and more prone to stress fractures. Be careful not to suddenly pry the brace open when it is very cold.

A molded "instep" pad is provided with the DAFO to be worn under the top/front edges of the brace in the transitional area between the foot and leg. This pad is important to protect against pinching and to keep the foot snug in the brace. The volume of the DAFO is planned with this pad in place. All the straps serve a specific purpose. For best results, fasten each one snugly.

Donning and Doffing

1. If possible, seat the patient with hip and knee flexed and the foot resting on the floor. Place an appropriate sock on the patient's foot (even during trial fittings) and smooth out any wrinkles or bagginess in the sock (a cottonsynthetic blend of moderate thickness is recommended). Open the top/front of the brace wide and "scoop" the foot into the brace.
2. Work the heel into the back of the brace. Pull the brace up and down slightly while pushing the top of the foot back.
3. Lift one side of the top/front opening and insert one side of the instep pad under the brace shell.
4. Lift the other side of the top/front opening and insert the remaining portion of the instep pad under the brace shell.
5. "Massage" the instep pad and top of the brace to settle the pad down onto the foot and to resettlement the foot back into the brace.
6. Pull up on the patient's forefoot to flex the ankle into slight dorsiflexion and then tighten the ankle (instep) strap until it is snug. Secure the strap.
7. Compress the brace around the forefoot and then lay over the forefoot strap. Secure the strap. 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 5-7.

Socks and Shoes

For compliance with higher AFO styles, consider a sports sock that, when worn inside out, is high enough to fold back down over the leg part of the brace. Soccer socks work well and come in lots of colors!

Shoes

All of our products are meant to be worn with socks and shoes.

Choosing shoes

To support the braces, look for shoes that:

- support the heel
- tie or strap snugly over the instep (especially for Fast Fit™ items)
- have room in the toe box (width and depth).

Sometimes, a wider width of your child's size will do the trick. Your Orthotist can also, and oftentimes will, order shoes appropriate for the DAFO.

Warranty

Our DAFOs are guaranteed for fit, materials and workmanship for ninety (90) days beginning fourteen (14) days after the date of shipment. During that time, at our sole option, we will adjust, repair or replace the brace if a problem exists. The ninety (90) day warranty period is meant to allow ample time for fitting and troubleshooting. We recommend scheduling the fitting appointment within the first two weeks after receipt of the braces.

Abuse, undue rough wear, or loss voids the warranty. This includes not wearing shoes over the braces during ambulation (except during therapy sessions) and/or destruction from outside sources such as heat, cold, impact or undue abrasion beyond normal wear and tear. This warranty gives you specific legal rights, and you may also have other rights which vary from State to State.

DAFO Wearer/Parent-Guardian of DAFO Wearer: Discuss any concerns you may have regarding the fit and/or workmanship of the braces with your **practitioner**. The practitioner will assess the brace to determine whether a simple adjustment will resolve an existing problem, or if a more substantial action is required.

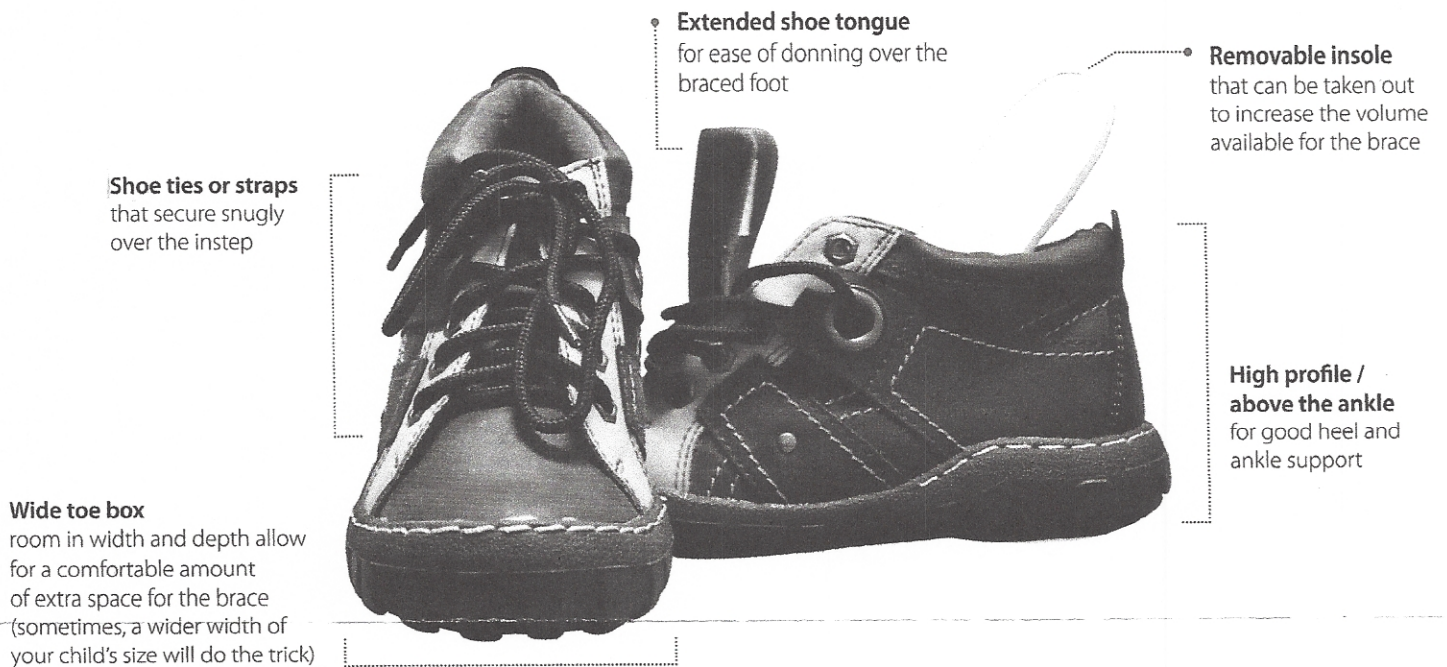
Socks & Shoes

Tips for choosing and using them

CASCADE
dafo

1 Shoe Tips | What To Look For

To ensure your child has the most support in his/her footwear, look for shoes with the following traits:



2 Shoe Tips | Trying The Shoe On

- Use a fairly aggressive push to get the brace down into the toe box.
- If the brace slides into the shoe easily, the shoe may be too large.
- Find the smallest shoe that can hold the brace. You may have to wiggle and push the brace into the shoe before the heel drops in. This extra work means the shoe will be only slightly longer than normal. If the shoe is too long, your child may trip over the toes.
- A shoe horn helps get the braced foot into the shoe.

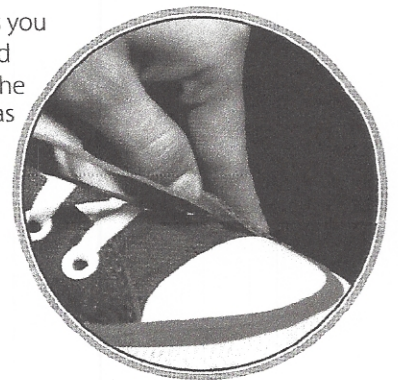
4 Shoe Tips | Shopping

- You may want to shop without your child. Take the brace with you and try fitting it into the shoe. You can often buy shoes, take them home for a relaxed fitting session and return or exchange them if needed.
- Once you find a brand you like, go to that specific brand again for a dependable fit.

3 Shoe Tips | To Help The Fit

Consider slightly altering the shoe, especially in canvas shoes with a sewn, overlapped toe box.

- Try snipping a few threads that hold the toe box closed around the attached end of the tongue.
- Look at the shoe as you insert the brace and foot to see where the material stretches as it holds the brace. A minor cut at this point can provide more room.



5 Shoe Recommendations | Orthopedic Shoes

These shoe brands are designed specifically to accommodate orthoses:

Answer2

ask your orthotist or shop online

Hatchbacks

www.hatchbacksfootwear.com | 800.936.0511

Keeping Pace

www.keepingpace.com | 800.526.0020

Markell Shoe Company

www.markellshoe.com | 914.963.2258

Shoe Recommendations | Other Options

Stores that offer a wide shoe selection are often functionally appropriate, stylish, and considerably less expensive.

Possible Brands

Champion	New Balance
DCs	Peak
Dinosoles	Skechers
Fila	Stride Rite
Keen	Vans
Merrell	

Stores

EMS	Sears
Fred Meyer	ShopKo
Kohl's	Target
Payless	Volume Shoes
JC Penny	zappos.com
REI	

6 Shoe Tips | Only One Brace?

If your child wears a brace on only one foot, you and your practitioner can discuss the following options:

- The brace will slightly increase the length (height) of the leg it's on. To maintain even leg height, put a molded insole into the unbraced foot's shoe. Our HotDog and PattiBob shoe inserts are ideal for this.



- For a bulkier brace, you may need two differently-sized shoes—one for the unbraced foot and a larger size for the braced foot.
- For more room, consider altering the braced foot's toe box (as shown in the fitting tips on page one).

7 Socks | What To Look For

For optimal comfort, you'll want to choose a cotton-blend tube sock with the following characteristics:

- fits smoothly against the skin (no bunching or folding)
- wicks perspiration away from the skin
- is seamless
- resists wrinkling

9 Socks | Knit-Rite® SmartKnit AFO® Socks

Knit-Rite SmartKnit socks are available for purchase on our website, www.cascadedafa.com.

Key features include:

- designed specifically for AFO applications
- completely seamless heel and toe
- extra long to provide full coverage
- Corespun Dupont Coolmax yarn provides superior wicking and ensures a wrinkle-free fit
- Microsafe fibers incorporated into the sock prevent growth of bacteria

8 Socks | Tip For Compliance

For compliance with higher AFO styles, consider a sports sock that, when worn inside out, is high enough to fold back down over the leg part of the brace. Soccer socks work well and comes in lots of colors.

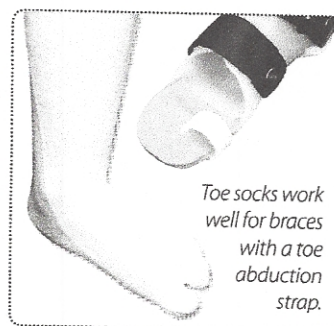
Sizing

SmartKnit socks are available in five sizes from Infant to Adult Regular. The children sizes come in a variety of colors.



Styles

You can choose a standard tube sock design or a toe sock with a separate big toe—for braces with a toe abduction strap.



Toe socks work well for braces with a toe abduction strap.

KNIT-RITE
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Questions? Please contact Customer Service:
800.848.7332 | customerservice@dafa.com

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