



Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO) and Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis (KAFO)

Careful time and consideration were made in conjunction with consultation with your physician when selecting the AFO or KAFO appropriate for you. Your AFO/KAFO is very adjustable, but these adjustments must be made by our staff. Any attempt to modify or adjust your orthosis will result in any warranty void of components and could cause serious injury to you. Routine follow-up care with your Orthotist is very important to ensure the orthosis is fitting and functioning for you properly. We would like to see you in 4 weeks after fitting, then every 3 months after that to ensure your AFO/KAFO is: fitting and functioning well for you and meeting the guidelines given to us by your physician.

Your AFO/KAFO must be worn with a full length sock or stocking underneath to: ensure proper fit, prevent shear forces between the orthosis and your skin, provide an adequate moisture barrier between the orthosis and your skin, improve comfort, prevent excessive pressure

During the first week of AFO/KAFO wear, gradually increase the amount of time you wear the orthosis. Start with 2 hours per day for one week. After the first week, add an hour daily so that by the end of the 2nd week you are wearing the orthosis full time. Also, gradually increase your activity level as you are wearing the orthosis. Do not over exert yourself. We've had patients "do too much, too soon" and cause problems in their lower extremities. This can easily be avoided by "knowing your own limits." Weight bearing and activity level restrictions placed on you by your physician must also be strictly adhered to.

It is also very important for you to frequently check your lower extremity throughout the day for signs of: pressure, irritation, rubbing, redness, discoloration, etc. The most common areas you will see this are: at the top strap of the AFO/KAFO, anywhere there is a mechanical joint on the orthosis, in the arch. Along the lateral border of the foot, and around the inside of the 1st toe, at the ball of the foot. If you notice any of these signs, which do not go away after a few minutes of removing the AFO/KAFO, stop wearing the orthosis and call our office for a follow-up appointment.

Proper footwear for your orthosis is crucial for the orthosis to work and fit you properly. The shoe must be: deep and wide enough to accommodate the orthosis and your foot, and be able to secure the AFO/KAFO to your foot safely. It also must have a wide enough base to support you safely when you walk. Most of the time, a wider shoe than you normally wear is required. If you experience excessive pressure on the ends of your toes, or at the ball of your foot, a ½ size larger shoe may be required. We can accommodate the non-affected shoe/side with an orthotic, or with a foot bed spacer. We are most concerned with the lower extremity that requires the orthosis, but we will definitely make sure that "the shoe fits" on the opposite side. We can order and fit appropriate shoes to you, but they are not always covered by insurance. Each individual's insurance policy is different. Ask our office staff to consult with your insurance to see if shoes are covered under your policy. (For pediatric patient's shoes are almost always provided due to the nature of the design of the AFO's)

You will probably find it easier to don the AFO/KAFO by leaving it in your shoe. It is much more difficult to put the orthosis on, then slide your shoe over it. Some of the KAFO's are easier to slip to shoe over, but most often its best to just leave your orthosis in the shoe. We have assistive devices to help you with his, and we've learned a few "tricks of the trade" over the years. If you have consistent difficulty donning/doffing your AFO/KAFO, schedule an appointment with us. You may need more training on your particular device, or a modification to either the orthosis or the shoe may be necessary. Don't give up on your AFO/KAFO! During the first week of orthotic wear, we are mostly concerned that you are putting it on and taking it off properly and efficiently.

As always, if you have questions or problems arise, feel free to call us any time.

Foot Orthotic Instructions and Expectations

Custom made foot orthotics are constructed uniquely for *your* feet. The materials are selected and the orthotics are fabricated based on *your* diagnosis, foot anatomy, and physician's prescription. The success of these orthotic devices depends on following these instructions.

Wear appropriate footwear with orthotic devices. This is the most common problem with custom arch supports. They must be used in conjunction with accommodative footwear, and that is your responsibility. Please use footwear that has:

- A) Appropriate depth and width – this means shoes containing removable insoles
- B) Appropriate fastening and control – Foot orthotics work best in closed back, flat sole, athletic shoes. Heel slipping may occur in some women's shoes but this should diminish over time. If the heel slip doesn't stop, try a different shoe or ask your practitioner.

Give your feet time to adjust to the arch supports. It is recommended to wear your supports for an hour in the morning, then an hour in the evening the first day. Add 30 min to each session, every day, until you are able to wear them full time. If you do not have discomfort, you may simply wear them full time.

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Max Hours	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Wear unless painful

Wait two weeks before adjustments. A return appointment is scheduled so we may check the function and fit of the supports. Reasonable and functional adjustments will be made at this time, but you may call and schedule an appointment if sooner adjustments are required.

Do not try to wear in men's or women's dress shoes unless your supports are designed with this type of shoe specifically in mind. Arch supports require room to properly function and fit. The prescribed supports will not properly fit or function in most dress shoes unless specifically requested to do so.

Regular Follow-up is critical. Over time, your foot may change with the use of your orthotics. The materials may also go through normal wear and tear. It is not uncommon for one of these occurrences to require modification to your foot orthotics. Regular follow up visits will ensure that your foot orthotics are working properly.

How to clean your foot orthotics:

Use a small cloth, soap and cool water. Do not use hot or warm water and do not submerge the orthotics in water as this may distort them and reduce their effectiveness.

Guarantee:

The covers are unconditionally guaranteed for six months. The covers will be individually considered after the period of six months. The arch supports are guaranteed not to break down for a period of one year from date of fitting. Since these are hand-made for a custom fit to only your feet, they may be adjusted but not returned.