

# Guidelines for Using Your New Orthosis

Wearing an orthosis, or brace, may be a new experience for you and your family. Here are a few guidelines to help you get used to your brace(s).

## Break-In

It can take up to one week to get used to wearing a brace for the amount of time that your doctor has prescribed. For the first couple of days, wear the brace for 1-2 hours at a time, followed by a 30-60 minute break. Increase the amount of time each day until you're up to the prescribed wear time.

## Skin Care

Protection and prevention are the keys to good skin care because it can be difficult to heal skin problems once they occur.

A clean, dry sock or stocking must be worn under the brace at all times. Pull it tight so there are no wrinkles under the brace. Change the sock daily. If you are sweating, change it more often. Moisture can cause skin breakdown, bacterial growth and odor.

You must check your skin frequently for red or pink marks. If a red or pink mark stays on your skin for longer than 30 minutes, or if the brace is uncomfortable, there may be too much pressure and you should contact your orthotist.

Avoid using lotions, creams and oils on the skin, as these products soften the skin and may lead to blisters or other skin irritations. Witch hazel, a product found in drugstores, can be used to toughen the skin. Apply witch hazel to the skin and pat lightly until dry.

If a problem such as a blister, open sore, swelling, excessive stiffness or severe pain occurs, discontinue use of the brace and call your physician or orthotist.

## Cleaning the Brace

Clean the brace at least once a day with mild soap and warm water or with alcohol. You can wipe down the pads that are glued to the brace as well (it will not harm them). Allow your brace to dry completely before putting back on.

## Follow-Up Appointments

Follow-up appointments are extremely important to make sure that as you grow, the brace fits well and is functioning properly. If at any time, your brace needs repair or just doesn't seem to be fitting correctly, you can schedule an appointment with ATD (Assistive Technology Department).

You'll probably be seeing your doctor every 4-6 months for a check-up. It's best if you can see your orthotist on that day as well. When scheduling clinic appointments, be sure to request an appointment in ATD to have your brace checked.

[Make An Appointment](#) [651-290-8707](#)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](#).