

Guidelines for Using Your New Spine Brace

Key Points

- Pink marks should fade away within 20 to 30 minutes.
- Follow-up appointments help us make sure your brace continues to fit well as you grow.

Wearing a spine brace may be a new experience for you and your family. Here are a few guidelines to help you get used to wearing your brace.

Wearing Schedule

It usually takes 1 to 2 weeks to get used to wearing a scoliosis or kyphosis brace for the amount of time that your doctor has prescribed. For most patients in spine braces, this means wearing the brace for 23 out of 24 hours per day. You can modify the break-in guidelines to fit your daily schedule. The goal is to slowly increase the amount of time that you wear your brace until you're up to the prescribed wear time.

Note: If you need to wear a brace for conditions such as a fracture or back pain, you might need to start wearing your brace full time by Day 2 or 3 in order to start the healing process. Your orthotist will be able to give you specific guidelines.

Day 1 and 2

Wear your brace for 1 to 2 hours and take it off for a 30 to 60 minute break. Check your skin after you remove your brace. All red or pink marks should fade away by the end of the break time. If your skin looks good after the break, repeat the 1 to 2 hours on and 30 to 60 minutes off until bedtime. Don't wear your brace to bed on Day 1 or 2.

Note: You won't need to wear the brace to school until Day 5 or 6.

Day 3 and 4

Increase your wear time to 3 to 4 hours at a time with a 30 to 60 minute break. Check your skin during each break to make sure the red or pink marks fade away. If your skin looks good after the break, repeat the 3 to 4 hours on with a 30 to 60 minute break.

Day 5 and 6

Increase your wear time to 5 to 7 hours at a time with a 30 to 60 minute break. Check your skin during each break to make sure the red or pink marks fade away.

On Day 5 or 6, you should try wearing your brace at night. If you can't wear the brace all night on the first try, don't worry. Just try it again the next night. Once you're comfortable wearing your brace all night, you can wear it to school.

Day 7 through 14

You should now be able to wear your brace 23 out of 24 hours per day. For those who are in sports or other activities such as swimming, the time in the brace will be less than 23 hours, as prescribed by your doctor.

Skin Care

A T-shirt or body sock must be worn under the brace to protect the skin. Pull it tight so there are minimal wrinkles under the brace. Change your T-shirt daily. If you are sweating, change the shirt more often. Moisture can cause skin breakdown, infections and body 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, there might be too much pressure and you should contact your orthotist.

Avoid using lotions, creams, and oils on the skin under your brace. 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 under the brace. Apply the witch hazel with a brisk slaplike hand movement. Pat the skin lightly until it is dry.

If open sores or blisters develop, notify your orthotist as soon as possible.

Cleaning the Brace

Clean the brace at least once a day with mild soap and warm water or with rubbing alcohol. You can wipe down the pads that are glued to the brace as well.

Follow-Up Appointments

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

You'll probably be seeing your doctor every 4 to 6 months for a check-up. You should see your orthotist on that day as well. When scheduling clinic appointments, be sure to request an appointment in Assistive Technology to have your brace checked. If possible, the Assistive Technology appointment should be scheduled before your X-ray and clinic appointment.

[Make An Appointment 651-290-8707](#) [Refer a Patient 651-325-2200](#)

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](#).