

# Use and Care of a New Prosthesis

## The prosthesis consists of:

- **A socket** The hard part of the prosthesis in which your limb (leg or arm) fits.
- **An interface** This may include a gel or foam liner, socks, and/or sheaths. These may be used against your skin to protect from friction, pressure or irritation. They may also be used to accommodate for swelling or volume loss of your limb to ensure proper fit of the prosthesis.
- **Means of suspension** Your prosthesis may be suspended (held on to your limb) in any of the following ways: suspension sleeve, waist belt, pin and lock, lanyard, suction, or harness. Your prosthetist will review the specifics of your suspension method to ensure you are properly able to use it.

## **One or more of the following, attached to the end:**

- Foot
- Knee
- Terminal device (hook or hand)

## Use

### **Wearing Schedule**

The first day you wear your new prosthesis home, remove it every 60 to 90 minutes to check your limb for redness or open areas.

If your skin is red when the prosthesis is taken off, this redness should disappear or turn pink within 20 minutes. The redness is simply your skin reacting to new pressure areas. If the redness persists, call your prosthetist and explain the problem. If a blister or open area is found, do not put the prosthesis back on, and call for an appointment with your prosthetist.

Remove your prosthesis when you go to bed. When you remove your prosthesis, you should clean the gel liner, socks, sheaths and/or suspension sleeve, following the manufacturer's recommendations. Your prosthetist may also have instructed you to wear a shrinker whenever you're not wearing your prosthesis. This is important if this is your first prosthesis or if your limb tends to swell. Keep your prosthesis close to you when resting or sleeping.

### **Accommodating Volume Changes**

The fit of your prosthesis may change as your limb changes. This is normal during the beginning months of wearing a new prosthesis. Some adjustments by your prosthetist can be made to accommodate for these changes. Be prepared to change the amount and/or the ply of your socks as the volume of your limb changes. This may occur once in a while, once a week, or even several times in one day. You will need to add or subtract socks as your limb swells or shrinks. Keep extra socks with you during the day to ensure the fit of the prosthesis is correct.

## Care and Maintenance

The components of your prosthesis have been carefully assembled, adjusted and secured. They should never be changed by anyone except a qualified prosthetist. Please call as soon as you notice a problem, so an appointment can be made for an adjustment or repair. The warranties of the components of your prosthesis should have been discussed with you by your prosthetist.

Make An Appointment

[651-290-8707](tel:651-290-8707)

Refer a Patient

[651-325-2200](tel: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](tel:651-229-3890).