

Guidelines for the use of your Ankle Foot Orthosis *(page 1 of 2)*



Putting on your Ankle Foot Orthoses

Ankle Foot Orthoses (AFO) are designed to hold your foot and ankle to make walking easier. This might be to improve your walking, to give you a stable base for standing, or to prevent deformity.

There are many different types of AFOs and therefore different ways of putting them on. Your Orthotist will show you how to put yours on. This guide will give you general advice.



If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customercare@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

General guidelines

- To make it comfortable and prevent it rubbing it is important that you put your AFO on properly, .
- A thin close-fitting cotton sock should be worn between your skin and the AFO.
- Your heel should then be firmly inserted into the AFO and the straps fastened securely.
- Your footwear should then be fitted around your AFO.
- Some people find it easier to keep their AFO inside their shoe and then put their foot into the shoe and the AFO at the same time. This is perfectly fine and will not effect the use of the device as long as you make sure that your heel is right down when you slip it in.
- If you have problems putting on your AFO please contact your orthotist for further advice.

Finding footwear

The footwear that is worn with your AFO is very important.

There are a few things that you should consider when deciding on footwear.

- If the shoe has a long lace up section it will open up further so that the AFO can fit in easily.

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- Some Velcro and buckle shoes are good but offer less adjustment.
- Do not wear high heels, they heels should be a maximum of between 1 - 2cm high. The splint will not work properly with high heels. Too high a heel can tip the knee forward too much and make you very unstable.
- A removable inlay is very useful to create more space, particularly if you have problems with your toes rubbing.

If you have difficulties finding footwear then please speak with your Orthotist.

Wearing your AFO

Your Orthotist will tell you how long you should wear your AFO for.

You should begin by using your AFO for short periods perhaps 1 hour, removing it to check for signs of pressure or rubbing (particularly around the foot and ankle).

You may notice some redness or marking initially, this should disappear within 20 minutes. If it does not, please do not use the AFO and contact your Orthotist.

Gradually increase the length of time that you use the AFO. It is important to continue to check your feet. If at any stage you think a blister might develop then contact your Orthotist to have your AFO adjusted.

Cleaning your AFO

The AFO should be cleaned with a damp cloth and towel dried, excessive heat will distort the shape.

Any fluff or hair can be picked out of the Velcro straps or they can be replaced by the orthotic department as required.

Useful contacts

British Association of Prosthetist and Orthotists (BAPO)

www.bapo.com

Telephone 0141 561 7217

The Stroke Association

www.stroke.org.uk

Telephone 0303 303 3100

Multiple Sclerosis Society

www.mssociety.org.uk

Telephone 020 8438 0700

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