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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.

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The JAY Balance Cushion (with fluid gel pad) (page 1 of 4)

Why do I need a JAY Balance cushion?

Your injury means that you may easily develop pressure marks and ulcers. You have been assessed as needing a specialist cushion to reduce the chance of this happening.

Your JAY Balance cushion

There are 2 types of JAY Balance cushion. This leaflet covers the use of the fluid gel pad.

The cushion is made up of four main parts:

- A moulded dual layer foam base.
- A moisture resistant inner cover. If required, the inner cover is used to contain any positional aids.
- A fluid gel pad. This is kept in place by Velcro strips on top of the inner liner.
- An outer cover for protection and handling of the cushion. Depending on your requirements the outer cover is available in 3 different types: Microclimatic, Stretch or Incontinent



Accessories such as a solid seat insert (SSI) or a wooden base may be used with this type of cushion.

The cushion gives stability and good weight distribution whilst promoting overall positioning and support.

Before use

The cushion must be used with both covers provided and it cannot be used without them.

If the covers are damaged or worn you will need to get a replacement from your cushion provider.

Always hold the cushion by the handle at the front or by the base.

Daily checks

You need to check the cushion every day.

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If someone else is doing this for you, you will need to tell them how to do it and make sure that they do as you have told them.

To provide sufficient padding under your bottom and prevent the cushion 'bottoming out', the gel section must be remoulded before using it. This will help prevent skin marking and development of pressure ulcers.

Remove the outer cover and check the gel pad for signs of leakage. Check the inner cover for signs of damage. Check the foam base for wear or change of shape.

Ensure the fluid pad is secured to the inner liner.

Check that any additional positioning components are not damaged and are correctly inserted.

If a support base is used such as a solid seat insert (SSI) or a wooden base, insert it correctly into the outer cover, underneath the foam base and inner liner.

The SSI and wooden base are designed to promote the life of cushion and your overall posture.

If you are using a foldable wheelchair, insert an SSI or a wooden base.

If you are using the cushion on a solid base, the SSI or wooden base must be removed.

If you have any queries about adjusting your JAY Balance cushion you can contact the Pressure Clinic or your local wheelchair service for advice.

Using the cushion

Once you have finished checking or cleaning the cushion, you will need to put it back together carefully. There are labels on the foam base, inner cover and the gel insert to help you with this.

The gel pad should sit on top of the inner cover, in the middle of the well in the foam base. When the Velcro tapes match up, press down firmly to keep the gel pad secure. The well section of the foam base should be completely covered by the gel insert.

The cushion has been designed to be used with an outer cover. Do not use it without the outer cover.

Do not place an alternative cover on the cushion such as a pillow case, as this will effect the efficiency of the cushion. It is at the discretion of your cushion supplier if a spare outer cover is provided.

When the covered foam base is placed inside the outer cover, the gel pad should be at the zippered end of the outer cover. The inner cover zipper should be visible when the outer cover zipper is opened.

The cushion is placed on the wheelchair with the carry handle at the front, labels at the sides and base and zippers at the back.

It is very important that all the parts are put together correctly and that the cushion is the right way round.

Do not store items under or to the side of your cushion as this could create a higher

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seating pressure, and lead to pressure marks or ulcers.

Sharp objects may puncture the gel pad. Should this happen you must contact your wheelchair service or your cushion supplier immediately.

Your skin can be badly damaged if the cushion is not used properly.

Cleaning your cushion

Remove the outer cover and turn inside out.

The outer cover can be machine washed on a 60°C wash cycle with mild detergent. Do not use bleach. It should be drip dried or tumble dried on a cool setting to prevent shrinkage. Washing instructions are on the label. Do not dry clean. Do not iron.

You need to separate the gel pad carefully from the inner cover and foam base combination before you can clean them.

If used, remove any positional aids before cleaning

The gel pad can be wiped clean with warm water and detergent. Make sure that areas between the folds are clean. Do not submerge in water.

The inner cover can be wiped clean with warm water and detergent. .

The foam base and positional items should be wiped with a damp cloth only - never use soap or detergent. Do not put the foam base or positional items in water. Always allow to dry naturally.

If the base or any of the additional components become soiled due to incontinence they must be replaced. They cannot be cleaned. Contact your wheelchair services or provider for a replacement.

Do not use strong substances such as bleach, alcohol products or oil-based lotions when cleaning your cushion.

Dry the cushion in open air. Do not place it in direct sunlight or in front of fires, radiators or heaters.

General information about the cushion

No latex has been used in making this product.

The cushion is guaranteed from manufacturing defects for 2 years.

The JAY Balance cushion generally lasts between 3 to 5 years, but this depends on your weight and how active you are.

When you need to repair or replace the cushion, contact the local wheelchair service or supplier. You can contact the Pressure Clinic for contact details.

The maximum user weight of this type of cushion varies depending on the pelvic loading area (PLA) ring size:

PLA ring sizes A and B (cushion widths up to 50cm) 150 kg / 360 lbs.

PLA ring size C (cushion widths over 50cm) 225 kg / 496 lbs.

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Pressure relief

You may need to carry out pressure relief on this cushion. If you are not sure whether you need to do this, please contact the Pressure Clinic.

Pressure relief helps to keep the blood flowing in your seating area. This is necessary for healthy skin and helps prevent ulcers forming.

Pressure is relieved when the bony parts of your bottom are lifted clear from the cushion. To do this you can lift your bottom off the seat or lean side to side or forward and then back. If possible relieve the pressure every 20 minutes for 20 seconds.

Skin

You should check your skin for any skin damage before getting into your wheelchair and on going back to bed. When in bed, if you have any red or pink marks on your skin, you will need to relieve pressure from the area until the mark has completely faded. If the mark is still there after 30 minutes, please contact the Pressure Clinic for advice.

New cushions are firmer than older ones, so you need to check your skin as often as possible when you get a new one.

The Pressure Clinic

You will attend the Pressure Clinic during the appointment with your consultant but you can arrange for extra appointments in the clinic if you want to.

You can also contact us for advice or information on pressure care. We can also provide addresses and telephone numbers of local wheelchair services as well as sales representatives for cushions.

The Pressure Clinic telephone number is 01722 429291.

Please remember that this hand-out is only to be used as a guide. Each person needs to be assessed for their own cushion. When you have your own cushion, you must still check your skin and attend the clinic for assessment.