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

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## **Matrix Range of Flotech Contour Cushions (1 of 4)**

### **Why do I need a Matrix Flotech Contour 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 Matrix Flotech Contour Cushion.**

There are different types of Matrix Flotech Contour cushions available, all are all similar in construction.



The Spinal Centre uses the following cushions from the Matrix Flotech Contour Range:

- The Matrix Flotech Contour
- The Matrix Flotech Contour Lo- Back
- The Matrix Flotech Contour Low Profile
- The Matrix Flotech Lite

Due to variations in the range it is best not to use a different type of Matrix Flotech Contour cushion until you have been assessed for its use. Please contact the staff at the Pressure Clinic who will be able to help.

The cushion is constructed using moulded foam, which is lightweight and durable.

The Matrix Flotech Contour cushion range gives stability and good weight distribution whilst helping your overall positioning and support.

This type of cushion can also be available in Visco foam (allowing the foam density to be modified to individual requirements). The density of the foam can impact on the overall support provided.

The cushion can be supplied with a built in sag compensator, to prevent the cushion from sagging when used with foldable wheelchair. This option is not available for the Matrix Flotech Contour Lo-Back cushion Accessories e.g. a Seat Rigidiser (SR) may also be used with all types of

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Matrx Flotech Contour cushion without the built in sag compensator.

## Daily Checks

The Matrx Flotech Contour cushion needs very minimal maintenance.

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

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

Regularly check for loss of shape, wear and compression (this will help to provide sufficient padding under your bottom and prevent the cushion "Bottoming Out").

Various covers can protect the cushion, depending on your requirements:

- a breathable outer cover that can be removed for washing, with a stretchy thin plastic inner liner underneath (to protect the foam cushion)
- a water-resistant breathable outer cover with an inner liner underneath.
- a waterproof wipeable outer cover.

If a seat rigidiser is used, this must be placed on the underside of the cushion, before putting on the inner liner / outer cover.

The seat rigidiser is designed to increase the life-span of cushion and overall posture by minimising the sagging of the foam base when the cushion is used on foldable wheelchair bases. This must be removed if used on a flat base as it can increase the interface pressure to your seating bones, causing skin damage and instability.

Do not add a seat rigidiser if your cushion has a built in sag compensator base.

Once you have finished checking or cleaning the cushion, you must put it back together carefully.

## Using the cushion

The cushion has been designed to be used with the outer cover for maximum efficiency and may be used without the cover for short periods, such as when the cover is in the wash, but only if an inner liner is used.

The wipeable outer cover and the inner liner are designed to protect the foam against moisture.

Depending on your requirements, a water-resistant breathable outer cover can be provided as an alternative. This would be used in conjunction with an inner liner.

The inner liner can be used for short periods but will cause an increased risk of heat generation or moisture build up on your skin.

Do not to place an alternative cover on the cushion such as a pillowcase or a towel, as this will affect the efficiency of the cushion, and can cause skin marking.

It is at the discretion of your cushion supplier if a spare outer cover is provided.

If any of the protective covers become damaged, they must be replaced. Should this happen

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you must contact your wheelchair service or your cushion supplier immediately.

The outer cover has descriptive labels on the side to enable correct positioning before use.

Do not store items under or to the side of your cushion as this could create a higher seating pressure, and lead to pressure marks or ulcers. Sharp objects may puncture and damage the protective covers.

Do not leave your cushion close to a naked flame or exposed to extremes of temperatures.

Do not bend the cushion as this will damage the foam properties.

The cushion has a raised contoured shape at the front to enable correct positioning before use. The outer cover has a handle at the front and a zipper at the back.

It is vital that the cushion is not placed the wrong way round (not back to front or upside down) inside the outer cover. Placing the complete assembled cushion the wrong way round can cause significant skin damage.

The maximum user weight of these cushions vary depending on type and size:

- The Matrx Flotech Contour 191kg / 421lbs
- The Matrx Flotech Contour Lo Back 152kg / 335.1lbs
- The Matrx Flotech Contour Low Profile 127kg / 280lbs
- The Matrx Flotech Lite 127kg / 280lbs

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

### **Cleaning your cushion**

Washing instructions can be found on the label of all types of the outer covers. Ensure the zipper is closed before cleaning.

The water resistant outer cover must be machine washed on a high temperature programme and tumble dried on a cool setting. This helps to maintain the water repellent and fire retardant properties of the cushion cover, while preventing shrinkage.

The breathable outer cover can be machine washed on a 40°C wash cycle and tumbled dry on a cool setting.

The wipeable outer cover and the inner liner can be cleaned with a damp cloth and normal household detergent and wiped dry. Do not tumble dry the wipeable covers.

All types of replacement covers are available from your wheelchair service or the supplier of your cushion.

The foam base can be wiped cleaned with a damp cloth and household detergent or soap.

Do not immerse the foam cushion (with or without protective covers) into water.

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

If the foam becomes soiled due to incontinence it must be replaced as the foam is absorbent and it cannot be cleaned. Contact your wheelchair services or cushion provider for a replacement.

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Never use bleach, alcohol products or oil based lotions to clean any parts of your cushion, as they can damage the cushion.

### **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 you skin as often as possible when you get a new one.

### **Life expectancy of the cushion and how to replace it.**

The Matrx Flotech Contour range of cushions should last between 18 – 24 months, but this can vary depending on the weight and how active you are. The cushion is guaranteed for 3 years from manufacturing defects.

To repair or replace your cushion, contact your local wheelchair service or supplier. If you are unsure of their address, please contact the staff at the pressure clinic who will be able to help.

### **How can Pressure Clinic help?**

We are available by telephone for advice, and you will also attend the Pressure Clinic during your Outpatient appointment to see your Consultant. Additional appointments can also be made for you to be seen in the Pressure Clinic should you so wish.

We can be contacted for addresses and telephone numbers of local wheelchair services, sales representatives for cushions, and for advice on any aspect of your pressure area care.

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Please remember that this hand-out is only to be used as a guide and that each person needs to be individually assessed for a cushion. Once a cushion is prescribed it does not reduce the need for skin checking and continued assessment.

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