

The range of *Matrx Libra* cushions (page 1 of 4)

Why do I need a *Matrx Libra* 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 *Matrx Libra* cushion

There are different types of *Matrx Libra* cushions available; all are all similar in construction.

The Spinal Centre uses the following cushions from the *Matrx Libra* range:

- The *Matrx Libra*
- The *Matrx Libra* heavy duty.

The *Matrx Libra* cushions have 4 main parts:

- a moulded foam base
- a fluid gel pad, which is secured by velcro straps on top of the foam base
- a thin stretchy plastic inner liner
- an outer cover for protection and handling of the cushion.



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Accessories such as a positional wedges, additional fluid sac or a seat rigidiser (SR) may also be used with both types of *Matrx Libra* cushion.

The *Matrx Libra* cushion gives you stability with good weight distribution whilst helping with overall positioning and support.

Before use

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

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 pressure ulcers developing.

Daily checks

You need to check the cushion every day.

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:

Pressure clinic
Tel: 01722 429291



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: customer care@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.

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- remove the cover and check the gel pad for punctures or leakage as these can remain undetected for several days
- regularly check the foam base for wear or change of shape
- make sure that any additional postural accessories are not damaged and are correctly inserted
- An inner liner is not fully sealed and has an opening at one end to insert the foam base / gel pad combination. This should be removed when checking the cushion. Always replace the inner liner after all checks.
- when fitting the gel pad to the foam base check that the gel pad covers the back cut out section
- depending on your requirements an additional fluid sac may be used. This will be secured by attaching to the strap of the gel pad or slotted inside the pocket underneath the gel pad
- make sure that the Velcro straps are secure, not twisted, and are tight against the sides of the cushion. The front strap is inserted through a slot in the foam base
- if a seat rigidiser is used, this must be placed on the underside of the cushion, on top of the velcro straps (as directed), before putting on the inner liner/outer cover
 - * the seat rigidiser is designed to promote the life-span of cushion and overall posture by minimising the foam base sagging 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.

When you have finished checking the cushion, put it back together carefully. The gel pad and foam base and seat rigidiser are labelled front/back to help you do this.

Using the cushion

Various covers protect the cushion: a breathable outer cover that can be removed for washing, with a stretchy thin plastic inner liner underneath (to protect the foam cushion)

The cushion has been designed to be used with the outer cover for maximum efficiency and may be used without the cover temporary, such as when the cover is in the wash, only if the inner cover is used, due to increased risk of heat generation / moisture build up on your skin.

Do not 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.

The outer cover has a large zipper at the back.

The outer cover have descriptive labels on the side to help you position it.

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

Do not store items under or to the side of your cushion because this could create a higher seating pressure, and lead to pressure marks or ulcers.

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

Positional wedges can be attached by adhesive strips underneath the foam cushion.

The inner liner must be removed prior to adding the wedges and replaced afterwards..

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

- The Matrix Libra (up to 20" widths) 136kg / 299.8lbs
- The Matrix Libra Heavy Duty (over 20" width) 272kg / 500.4lbs.

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

Cleaning your cushion

The outer cover must be machine washed on 40°C wash cycle 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 inner liner can be cleaned with a damp cloth and household detergent or sanitising wipes. Do not over saturate or immerse into fluid.

An inner liner is not fully sealed and has an opening at one end. Inspect the inner liner for damage.

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

The foam base / postural wedges / gel pad and additional fluid sac can be wiped cleaned with a damp cloth and household detergent or sanitising wipes..

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

Do not immerse the foam base or postural wedges in water and allow it to dry naturally.

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

Never use bleach, alcohol products or oil based lotions to clean any parts of your cushion, as they can perish the materials used in construction.

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

Ensure that the foam base is placed the correct way inside the cover (and not back to front or upside down) and that the gel pad is at the back of the cover.

It is important that all the parts are assembled correctly. Placing the foam base, gel pad or the complete assembled cushion the wrong way round can cause significant skin damage.



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Life expectancy of the cushion and how to replace it

The Matrix Libra cushion should last between 24 – 36 months, but this can vary depending on your weight and how active you are. The cushion is guaranteed for 2 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.

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.

How can the 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.

Pressure Clinic – Telephone : 01722 429291

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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