

The Vicair Academy Active cushion (page 1 of 5)

Why do I need a Vicair Academy Active 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 Vicair Academy Active cushion

The Vicair Academy Active cushion is made up of three main parts:

- An outer cover for protection and handling. The cover is an integral part of the cushion as it contains all the components. A storage pocket is attached at the front.
- A moulded medium-density foam insert. This is placed into the front of the outer cover
- 3 separate liners containing small plastic pyramid shaped air pockets (smart cells). The smart cells sit on top of one another inside the liner. The liners are placed into different sections of the outer cover



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.

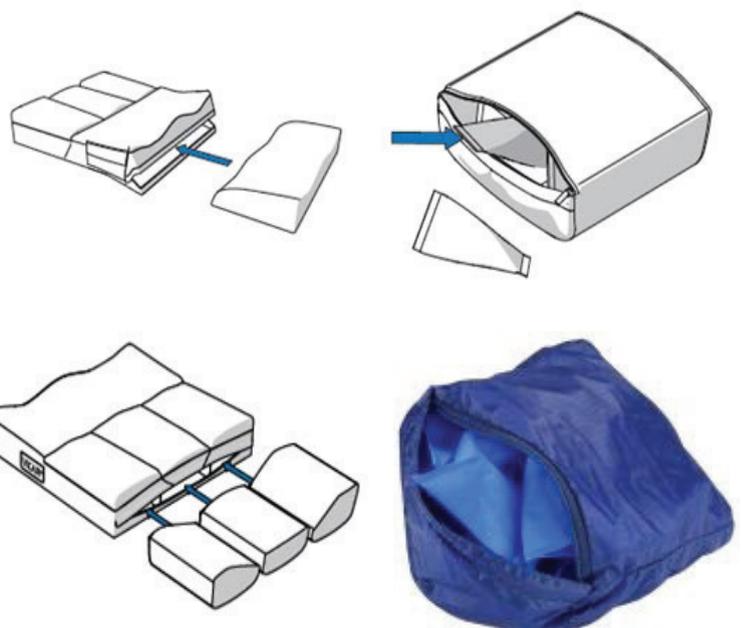
The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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The Vicair Academy Active cushion is available in 6 cm or 9 cm heights.

Due to muscle bulk loss around seating bones Spinally injured patients are recommended to use the deeper 9 cm height version, which offers more support.

We advise you not to use a different type of Vicair Academy



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Active 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 provides stability and good weight distribution whilst helping with overall positioning and support. The Vicair Academy Active cushion can be adapted to suit your individual needs.

Accessories such as a solid seat base can be used with the Vicair Academy Active cushion.

Before use

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

The waterproof outer cover is an integral part of the cushion. The cover can be removed for washing, and the liners are wipeable.

The back of the cover is separated into 3 different compartments. These hold the liners containing the smart cells in each section.

Zipper are used at the front and rear of the outer cover to remove the foam insert or smart cell liners from the compartments.

Make sure the cushion is assembled correctly before using it.

Always check the cushion parts for loss of shape, wear and or compression. Regularly check the condition of zippers on the cover and liners and if damaged seek replacement immediately.

The outer cover protects the cushion. Always replace worn or damaged covers.

Replacement covers are available from your wheelchair service or the supplier of your cushion.

If a solid seat base is used, this is placed underneath the outer cover. The solid seat base is designed to prolong the lifespan of the cushion and your 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, promoting skin damage.

Daily checks

The Vicair Academy Active cushion requires 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.

Regularly check the foam insert and smart cells for signs of wear and tear or deterioration.

To prevent the cushion "bottoming out" the air cells must be dispersed around the different compartments to provide sufficient padding under your bottom. To do this, gently shake the cushion before getting into your wheelchair each time.

The foam inset should be placed into the cover with the sloping side pointing to the back and the contoured side facing upwards.

The smart cell liners are individually labelled to ensure they are placed into the appropriate

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compartment.

Once you have finished checking or cleaning the cushion, you will need to put it back together carefully. The outer cover/smart cell liners and foam insert are labelled to help you do this.

Placing the complete assembled cushion the wrong way round can cause significant skin damage.

Using the cushion

The Vicair Academy Active cushion is designed to be used with the outer cover for maximum efficiency.

It is essential that all Vicair cushions are placed the correct way round on your wheelchair.

The outer cover has a zipper s at the front and back, with descriptive labels on the sides and underside (at the back) of the cover to enable correct positioning before use.

We advise you to use the front storage pocket and avoid storing items under or to the side of your cushion. This could create a higher seating pressure, leading to pressure marks or ulcers.

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

Because each smart cell is filled with air, the cushion may behave differently when used at high altitude such as when used in an aeroplane. In such situations, the cushion's firmness can be adjusted by temporary removing a few cells from each compartment.

After landing, the smart cells must be reinserted back into the appropriate compartments.

This should only be done after consulting your cushion supplier or the Pressure Clinic for advice on safe removal of smart cells before your departure date.

It is recommended that all smart cells are inspected every 3 months. If a large number of smart cells appear deflated or damaged, discontinue use and contact your provider immediately.

The zipper underneath of the liner allows removal of the smart cells.

smart cells should only be added or removed from the cushion, for specific reasons such as positional support or travelling. It is important you note how many smart cells are removed and from which compartment.

For guidance a label is provided on the recommended filling of smart cells in each compartment. This can be found on the outer cover at the back.

You are at risk of skin damage if you add or remove any smart cells from the compartments without guidance or further assessment from a healthcare professional.

The maximum user weight of this cushion is 200kg / 440lbs

We advise you not to place an alternative cover on the cushion e.g. 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.

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

Cleaning your cushion

You must separate the foam base and liners from the outer cover before you can clean them.

Do not put the entire cushion into water or any other liquid. Do not autoclave or steam clean.

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.

Light stains can be wiped with a damp cloth using household detergent and aired dry.

After removing the foam insert and smart cell liners, the outer cover can be machine washed on a 40°C wash cycle. Drip dry or tumble dry on a cool setting to prevent shrinkage.

Washing instructions are on the label.

The liner and smart cells can be cleaned with a damp cloth with household detergent or soap and wiped dry. Do not put the liners in water. Ensure the smart cells are replaced correctly into the appropriate compartment.

The foam insert cannot be wiped down but sprayed with disinfectant spray and air dried.

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

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.

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Life expectancy of the cushion and how to replace it

The Vicair Academy Active 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.

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.