



AFO / KAFO Wear & Care Guide

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Explanation of the Orthosis

AFO is a specific orthosis that stabilizes the ankle (A) and foot (F), thus named Ankle Foot Orthosis. KAFO stands for a Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis. Either orthosis may be fabricated out of metal and/or numerous types of plastic. In most cases, an AFO or KAFO has been recommended by your physician to improve your gait (walking pattern) or for post fracture management. The gait has most likely been affected by a neurological deficit secondary to trauma, a surgical procedure or due to a congenital anomaly. However, your physician may have recommended an AFO or KAFO for you for positional and/or transfer functions only. Regardless of the reason for the recommendation, all of the following will apply.

Wearing the Orthosis

AFOs and KAFOs are used to replace muscle function or to assist in the stability of a joint. For this to be accomplished, the patient must be consistent in the proper wearing of the orthosis. If you have never worn an AFO or KAFO, then a break in period may be needed.

There is no break-in period for post-operative or fracture management uses of AFOs and KAFOs. They must be worn as indicated by the physician to ensure the maintenance of the surgical procedure or fracture.

Applying the Orthosis (Donning)

The proper donning technique is to lay the corset on a flat surface, as a bed, then lay your body down unto the orthosis. Attach the fasteners in the front of the orthosis and pull the side straps tight. The straps should be tightened bottom to top with enough pressure as you are able to withstand without pain or discomfort. Some corsets may have shoulder straps which should be applied while lying down and tightened when standing.

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Removing the Orthosis (Doffing)

Make sure you loosen the front straps as indicated by the specific attachment device. Once the orthosis has been loosened, you may remove it.

Care/Washing the Orthosis

Before the orthosis can be washed, the metal posterior stays must be taken out. In order to remove the stays, slip them out of the pocket at the top edge of the orthosis. Remember to put the stays back in the same position they were in originally. The corset may be wash in a mild detergent, such as woolite and then line dry. Do not blow dry or put the orthosis in the dryer. Make sure that the orthosis is completely dry before wearing it again.

Follow Up Visits

Now that you have been fit with your orthosis, any maintenance or adjustments must be made by Optech O&P at your discretion. Appointments are necessary if there has been a weight gain or loss and the orthosis no longer fits properly. Please contact our office if an adjustment is needed.

If you have any questions about the wear & care of this product, please contact Optech Orthotics & Prosthetics for more information.

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