

OrthoPro of Reno, Inc.

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About Your New AFO (Ankle Foot Orthosis)

An **ankle foot orthosis (AFO)** is a custom made brace used to support muscles, immobilize joints, and/or correct the position of your foot and ankle. It may be made of metal, thermoplastic, or a combination of materials.

The following instructions were designed to help you properly clean, care for, and use your new AFO. Please read these instructions carefully and let your Orthotist know if you have any questions. Compliance with your health care providers' instructions is essential to the effective use of this device. Be sure to follow any special instructions given to you by your physician or Orthotist in addition to those provided here.

Wearing Instructions

If there is a plastic ankle and foot section to your AFO, you will need to wear a lace-up or Velcro shoe that has enough room for both your foot and the brace to fit comfortably. Be sure to remove your shoe or sneaker insert before wearing your brace with your shoe or sneaker.

Wear a cotton sock between your skin and the brace. The sock should extend beyond the top of the brace. It will absorb perspiration and help protect your skin.

When you first try to walk with your brace, it may feel awkward. This is normal. Practice in your home or with a physical therapist before you walk outside.

Begin by wearing your brace for half an hour at a time, then take it off and rest your leg. Alternate between wearing the brace and resting your leg for the first few days. Gradually increase your wearing time over the next several days.

Check your skin for red spots. If the reddened area does not fade after 20 minutes, call your Orthotist. This is especially important if you are diabetic or have poor sensation in your leg.

Don't worry if your orthosis feels awkward. A new brace always feels unfamiliar at first. Your brace should gradually feel more natural over the course of approximately two weeks.

Suggested Wearing Schedule:

- Days 1-3: Wear 30 minutes, 3 to 4 times a day
- Days 4-6: Wear 60 minutes, 3 to 4 times a day
- Days 7-10: Wear 90 minutes, 3 to 4 times a day
- Days 11-14: Wear full time or as prescribed by your physician

Care of Your AFO

At least once a week, wipe the plastic sections of your brace with rubbing alcohol.

If your brace has metal joints, they will periodically need to be lubricated. Ask your Orthotist what type of lubricant to use.

Potential Risks & Precautions

Check your skin every day for redness, blisters, discoloration, soreness, or swelling. Call our office and discontinue use of your brace immediately if you notice any of these symptoms.

Never attempt to adjust, repair, or otherwise modify your brace. The components of this device have been carefully chosen, assembled, adjusted, and secured according to your physician's prescription and the manufacturer's specifications. In order to maintain the safety and effectiveness of your device, adjustments may be made only by a qualified medical professional.

Be sure to attend any follow-up appointments scheduled by your fitter. Call our office if any unexpected problems occur.

For medical emergencies, call 911 or your local hospital.

Patient Signature; _____

Date; _____