

Boston Scoliosis Orthosis

Wear Instructions and Brace Care Guide

Applying your Orthosis

There are several methods of application. At first you will need help but eventually you will learn to do it yourself. The easiest method is described below:

- Make sure all straps are outside the orthosis.
- Place orthosis around your body by holding each side and spreading the orthosis so you can twist into it. The orthosis is stiff when new, you might need help.
- The opening of the orthosis should be centered on your back so that the bumps on the spine and the crease between the buttocks are in the middle of the opening.
- Push the orthosis down by placing hands on your hips - the sausage shaped pads (or waist pads) on the inside of the orthosis should rest just above your hips and below your ribs.
- Lean forward onto your forearms on a table, dresser, counter etc. - your helper will thread the straps through the buckles.
- Your helper applies pressure with the flat of one hand to the side opposite the buckle. At the same time the helper pulls the velcro strap with the other hand toward the hand applying the pressure.
- Secure the middle strap first, then bottom and top straps, then straighten up.



How to apply and tighten the orthosis yourself

- Place orthosis on your body as described.
- Thread the straps through the buckles.
- Lean forward from your hips and pull straps out, down and away from the buckle side. Remember to be patient, this takes practice



Helpful Hints:

- Make sure your spine and gluteal crease is centered in the orthosis opening.
- The waist pads must be above your hips and below your lowest rib.

Exercises

If your orthopedic surgeon prescribed physical therapy, your physical therapist will design a customized exercise program based on your needs.

Skin Care

It is very important to prevent skin breakdown (that is sore, red, raw skin). The skin under the orthosis needs to be toughened up, especially where the orthosis applies the most pressure.

To Protect The Skin:

- Bathe daily.
- Pay special attention to pink areas of the skin where orthosis pressure is highest.
- Always wear a Boston T or a snug fitting t-shirt (without seams) under your orthosis (available from your orthotist).
- Always wear underpants over the orthosis (to prevent skin breakdown around elastic band).
- Wear orthosis as tightly as possible. A loose orthosis may rub and cause skin breakdown.
- The use of cornstarch is often helpful in the hot weather. Initially do not use creams, lotions or powders under the orthosis. They often soften the skin. If there is skin breakdown (sore, red, raw skin) the orthosis must not be reapplied until the skin heals (one day or more). If this happens, call your nurse or orthotist.

Sometimes the skin over the waist and hips gets darker. This is common and is not a problem. When the orthosis treatment is complete, the discoloration will fade.

Cleaning Instructions

- It is important to clean the foam liner of your orthosis daily. The foam will not absorb moisture, however, perspiration will collect on it.
- Our braces can be cleaned with mild soap and water, and air dried. A simple method for cleaning is to hold the brace up to a shower head and rinse with water.
- At least once a week, spray or rub the interior with rubbing alcohol. The rubbing alcohol will disinfect the liner and quickly evaporate.

SUCCESSFUL ORTHOSIS WEARING REQUIRES YOU TO:

- Wear your orthosis 18-23 hours daily within 2-3 weeks (unless otherwise specified by your Doctor).
- Take care of your skin daily.
- Wear a Boston T or a snug fitting t-shirt at all times under your orthosis.
- Properly apply the orthosis to your body.
- Clean your orthosis daily.
- Complete your exercise program daily.
- Gradually increase your daily wearing time.

Breaking in your Orthosis

Over a period of 2-3 weeks, gradually increase the time per day in your orthosis. The following program is designed to help your skin and muscles adjust to the orthosis:

STAGE I: Wear orthosis 6 hours daily.

- Best accomplished after school and up to bedtime.
- Apply orthosis for 2 hours.
- Remove orthosis, check skin. If your skin is just pink, reapply orthosis for 2 more hours and repeat up to 6 hours total.
- If your skin is sore and red, wait 30 minutes and wear for 2 more hours up to 6 hours total.

STAGE II: Wear orthosis 10 hours daily.

- Apply orthosis for 4 hours.
- Remove orthosis, check skin.
- Reapply orthosis for 3 hours.
- Remove orthosis, check skin.
- Reapply orthosis up to 10 hours total.

STAGE III: Wear orthosis 18-23 hours daily (or prescribed daily hours).

- Apply orthosis before school.
- At lunchtime or 4 hours later, remove orthosis, check skin.
- Reapply orthosis.
- After school, remove orthosis.
- Reapply orthosis at bedtime.
- Sleep in orthosis.

Once you are able to sleep in your orthosis, you have achieved your goal of orthosis wearing! Strictly follow the hours called for in your treatment plan. Make time daily for bathing, skin care, undershirt changes, and exercise.

The follow-up care of each patient is specific to the patient's scoliosis and curve pattern, as well his or her ability to return for brace adjustments and follow-up appointments. In general, we prefer the following for patients who live locally:

1. In brace X-ray within two weeks from brace fitting to check brace function.
2. Two Week follow-up of the brace quality. It is important to verify fit and function with in brace x-ray, pad pressure, patient comfort, and correct donning of the brace.
3. Three month follow-up of brace quality. Listen to patient feedback on fit, comfort, and change in height since the fitting.
4. Brace follow-up every three months until a new scoliosis brace is needed.
5. A new brace should be fabricated before the old one doesn't fit due to changes in anatomy or growth.

As you grow and your body changes, further adjustments will need to be made. If your brace becomes less comfortable, no longer fits, or if at any point you have questions or concerns, please contact your Orthotist or call to schedule an appointment.