

## Bracing with the Ponseti AFO

### Instructions for use:

1. Open the orthosis so all of the leather fasteners are clear for inserting the foot. Buckles should be placed to the inside of the foot.
2. Holding the lower leg, gently slide the foot into place until the heel is snug against the back and bottom of the orthosis.
3. Pull tongue horizontally against the ankle and hold in place with your thumb. Be sure the hole in the tongue is set above the middle strap.
4. Buckle the middle strap snugly over the horizontal tongue. Snugly buckle the ankle strap.
5. Look through the heel opening at the back of the orthosis to ensure the heel is fully down and back. If not, readjust tongue and middle Strap.
6. Once upper straps are tight and heel is snugly in place, buckle the toe strap and retighten the other straps if needed. Clip shoe into the bar.



## Frequently asked product questions:

- 1) Do the buckles go to the inside of the foot or to the outside of the foot?
  - The Ponseti AFO was designed with the buckles set to the inside of the foot.
- 2) The patient's heel isn't down in the AFO. Is there something wrong?
  - Place the foot into the shoe, bend the child's knee and push down slightly to make sure the heel is seated and then press gently on the top of the foot (where the leg meets the foot) with your thumb, to make sure that the foot is all the way in, and tighten the middle strap first. The strap helps to keep the heel firmly down into the shoe.
- 3) How long will each pair of shoes last?
  - On average, a pair of shoes will last 4-6 months. Some children grow rapidly and will need a pair within 3 months. As the patient's growth rate slows, more time can be expected from each pair of shoes.
- 4) How long will the bar last?
  - The bars are adjustable and should last approximately 2-3 pairs of shoes. The bar width should be periodically checked and adjusted to match the patient's shoulder width or as recommended by your physician or orthotist.

## Helpful Tips

Expect your child to fuss in the brace for the first 2 days. This is not because the brace is painful, but because it is something new and different. They may have sore muscles and skin sensitivity as a result of the casting. If your child is completely inconsolable and you believe that they are in pain, contact your doctor right away.

Play with your child in the brace. This is a key to getting over the irritability quickly. The child is unable to move his/her legs independent of each other. You must teach your child that he/she can kick and swing the legs simultaneously with the brace on. Try making a game of the motions, singing and or talking to your child in an encouraging manner.

Make it a routine. Children do better if you make this treatment a routine in their life. When the child is only wearing the brace at night and naptime, put the brace on any time your child goes to the "sleeping spot." They will figure out that when it is that time of day they need to wear the brace.

Pad the bar. A bicycle handle bar pad, or foam pipe insulation covered with fabric or tape works well for this. By padding the bar you will protect your child, yourself, and your furniture from being hit by the bar when the child is wearing it.

Never use lotion on any red spots on the skin. Lotion will make the problem worse. Some redness is normal with use. Bright red spots or blisters, especially on the back of the heel, usually indicate that the shoe was not worn tightly enough. Make sure that the heel stays down in the shoe.

**If the boots appear 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.**