

# Ankle-Foot Orthosis

## What is an Ankle-Foot Orthosis (AFO)?

An AFO supports the lower leg and foot. Your AFO is designed specifically for your condition and functional goals.

An AFO can be made of plastic, metal & leather, or carbon composite. At the ankle, your AFO may be:

- Solid (no motion at the ankle),
- Flexible
- Articulated (have a joint that allows motion).



## How do I put my AFO on?

At first, putting the AFO on may be difficult. Training and practice are necessary.

1. Put on a clean, dry sock.

You may prefer a long knee-high sock, especially if you have sensitive skin.

2. Place your leg and foot in the AFO.

**Make sure your heel is all the way down in the AFO.**

3. Fasten the Velcro straps.

## What kinds of shoes should I wear?

Always wear your AFO inside of a shoe.

- Choose a shoe with a removable insole to create space for the AFO.
- Laces work well because they open wide to put the shoe on, and then can be tightened to keep the AFO secure on the foot.
- You may need a shoe that is wider, deeper, or a size larger to fit the AFO.

Some people prefer to put on their AFO, and then put on their shoe. Others find it easier to place the AFO in the shoe, and then insert their foot

## **What is a break-in wear schedule?**

When you first receive your AFO, it may take a number of days before you acclimate to the orthosis and start experiencing relief from symptoms.

- Initially you may experience discomfort in other parts of the body, such as knees, hip, or back. This is due to the corrected alignment the AFO is providing.

Follow the break-in wear schedule recommended by your orthotist or doctor:

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## **How should I clean the AFO?**

- Wipe the AFO with soap and water. Dry completely. Do not submerge in water.
- Once a week, disinfect the AFO with rubbing alcohol.

## **How should inspect my skin and AFO?**

Each time you remove your AFO, check your skin for pressure areas or irritation.

- Pressure spots should dissipate after 30 minutes.
- Look for any abrasions, blisters or any open area of the skin.
- Examine your AFO for cracking, chipping, or loss of support.

Stop wearing your AFO and contact your orthotist if these occur.

## **What if I have a problem or question about my AFO?**

Contact your clinician via the Patient Portal. My clinician is \_\_\_\_\_

OR

Call our office at one of the following numbers:

- Outpatient Locations: 734-973-2400
- University Hospital: 734-936-7043

Michigan Medicine Orthotics & Prosthetics Center

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If you experience any changes in your general health, please contact your doctor.

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