

What is a TLSO?

Following spinal surgery or injury to your back, you will be required to wear a TLSO.
(Thoraco - Lumbo - Sacral - Orthosis)

The TLSO is a plastic brace with a soft padded liner. There is a front piece and a back piece which are connected with Velcro straps on the sides.

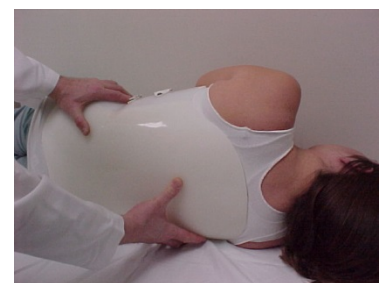


The TLSO helps to immobilize the spine during the healing process. The average length of time required to wear a TLSO is 10 - 12 weeks. It may be longer or shorter depending on the rate of healing or as determined by your doctor.

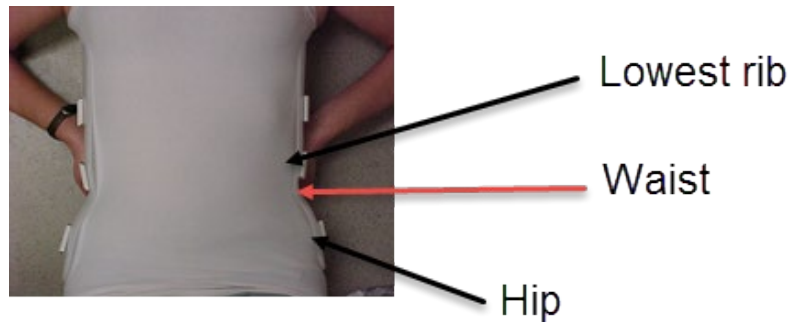
How do I put my TLSO on?

Initially you will need help to put the TLSO on.

1. Put on a clean, dry T-shirt
2. Identify the back half of the TLSO. Identify the waist indentations.
3. Lying on a flat bed, log roll to the side. Have your assistant feel for the space between your hip and lowest rib. Position the waist indentation in this space.
4. Slide the edge of the TLSO under your body.



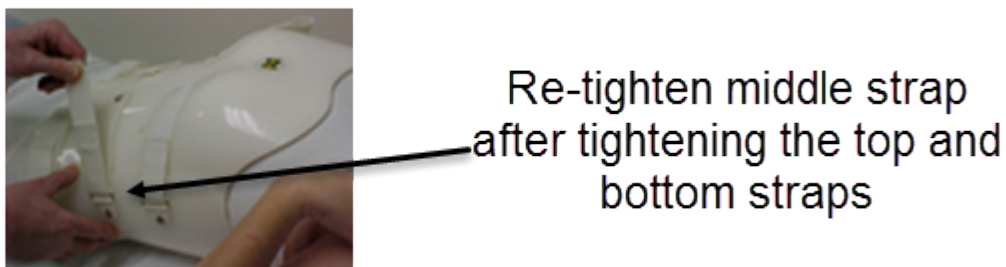
5. Roll onto your back into the TLSO. Be sure both waist indentations line up in between the hip (iliac crest) and the lowest rib.



6. Lay the front of the TLSO over the back so the front overlaps the back. Do not tuck the front inside the back unless your TLSO is specifically marked to do so.

7. Fasten the straps snugly.

- Start with the middle straps.
- Next, fasten the top and bottom straps.
- After fastening the top and bottom straps, the middle straps may have worked loose. Retighten the middle straps.
- If the straps are loose, the TLSO may shift out of place and ride up.



What do I do if the TLSO rides up?

If the TLSO shifts upwards toward your chin, you must re-position the orthosis.

- Lay down and remove the front of the TLSO.
- Roll to the side and have your assistant slide the back of the TLSO down so that the waist indentations line up between the hip and rib.
- Roll onto your back and continue with the steps listed above.

How should I bathe?

You may not shower unless approved by your doctor.

- If you are not allowed to shower, you must sponge bathe while lying flat.
- If you are allowed to shower, you must always shower with your TLSO **on** until instructed by your doctor that it is OK to shower without the TLSO.

Follow these steps to shower with the TLSO on:

1. Lie down. Remove front of the TLSO, then log-roll to the side to remove the back.
2. Remove your T-shirt
3. Put the TLSO on directly against your skin.
4. Do not loosen the TLSO in the shower. Allow water and soap to run inside the TLSO.
5. Following your shower, lie down and remove the TLSO.
6. Dry your skin and the TLSO. Use a hair dryer on a cool setting to dry the straps.

How should I clean the TLSO?

Clean the TLSO once per day with soap and water. Once a week, disinfect the TLSO with rubbing alcohol. Allow the TLSO to dry completely before reapplying.

How should I care for my skin?

- You must keep your skin clean and dry.
- Avoid lotions, creams and powders on your skin under the TLSO. Use cornstarch powder only if necessary.
- Check your skin frequently for areas of redness or irritation. Lie down, remove the TLSO, and lift the T-shirt to visualize the skin.
- If you have a painful or red area, it may be due to improper positioning of the TLSO. Reapply the TLSO lying down and observe the skin again in 1-2 hours. If the painful or red area does not go away after repositioning, your TLSO may need to be adjusted.

- If you have an open area from pressure or any irritation from the TLSO on the incision, contact your doctor as well as your orthotist.

What clothing should I wear?

- Always wear a clean, dry T-shirt or undershirt under the TLSO. There must always be a barrier between your skin and the TLSO (except when showering).
- It may be necessary to change your T-shirt throughout the course of the day.
- Underwear should be worn over the TLSO to prevent the need to remove the TLSO to use the bathroom.
- For women, a bra may not be necessary. If a bra is necessary, we recommend a soft sports-style bra with no metal clips or fasteners.
- Wear loose-waisted pants or shorts over the TLSO.
- Wear oversized shirts or sweaters over the TLSO.

What are my activity instructions?

1. Driving

Do not attempt to drive with your TLSO on. You cannot react normally and are considered an impaired driver. It is extremely unsafe for both you and other drivers. You could cause an accident or get a ticket.

To enter the car as a passenger, back into the seat with your body bent forward (the TLSO will only allow you to bend to 90 degrees). Swing your legs around. To get out, reverse the process. Always wear a seatbelt.

Do not ride a bike or any wheeled vehicle or toy. Balance is difficult and you are at risk of falling.

2. Sleeping

Your doctor will instruct you on whether you need to wear the TLSO at night. If you tend to get up frequently during the night, you can sleep in the TLSO. If you sleep in the TLSO, you must check your skin in the morning.

3. Getting up

You must put your TLSO on while you are lying down. When getting up, do not sit straight up by bending at the waist. To get up, roll onto your side at the edge of the bed, drop your legs off the edge, and push with your elbow and hand at the same time.



What if I have a problem or question about my TLSO?

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

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

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