Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis (KAFO)

Version number: **1**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

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Patient Information

Surgical Appliances

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Introduction

You have been provided with a knee-ankle-foot orthosis, or KAFO, which has been designed to meet your individual needs.

KAFOs are complex devices; their designs and materials vary to suit each individual.

What are KAFOs prescribed for?

KAFOs are provided to compensate for muscle weakness, paralysis or skeletal problems which cause lower limb instability. The KAFO aims to make standing and walking easier by:

- Controlling joint instability
- Preventing excessive joint motion
- Improving joint alignment
- Reducing joint pain

When should my KAFO be worn?

You should gradually increase the wear time with your KAFO. This allows your skin to adjust to the supportive pressures which the KAFO applies. Begin by using your KAFO in a safe, indoor environment.

Wearing time will be individual to each patient. Please follow the instructions supplied to you by the Orthotist.

Care of your leg & KAFO

Before putting the KAFO on, you should inspect it to ensure the knee joints move freely without resistance, and if it has a lock, that these engage correctly and fully. Please do this before weight bearing in your KAFO.

You should also check for any other defects:

1. Check that all straps are fastening securely.

2. You must ensure (if applicable) that the spurs at the end of your KAFO are fully inserted into the sockets in your shoes, before standing.

You should also do the following on a daily basis:

1. Inspect all aspects of your leg which come into contact with the KAFO, checking for red marks, abrasions, bruising or wounds. Use a mirror or ask someone for help if necessary.

2. If you are experiencing discomfort, or the skin is marked red or broken, please contact the Orthotics department immediately for advice.

3. All KAFOs must be worn with socks and footwear.

4. Ensure your shoes have the correct heel height, recommended by your Orthotist.

You must not adjust the KAFO yourself - any adjustments must only be carried out by the Orthotics department.

Review appointments

ALL patients who have been prescribed with a KAFO will be sent a routine 6 monthly review appointment. It is essential you attend your review appointments.

ALL KAFOs MUST be inspected for workmanship and safety **every 6 months** by the Orthotic department without exception. It is your responsibility to ensure you bring your KAFO into the department every 6 months to be checked for safety.

If you have any problems with your KAFO before your KAFO is due a safety check, or if you feel your condition has changed, please do not wait - make sure you contact the Orthotics department for a review appointment.

Following a safety check or any alterations to your KAFO, the KAFO must be fitted by the Orthotist, not collected.

Where a KAFO has not been safety checked within a 6-month period, we strongly advise that you are **NOT** to wear the KAFO.

Contact details

Orthotics Department:

Aspull Health and Wellbeing Centre,

Oakfield Crescent,

Aspull,

Wigan,

WN2 1XJ

Telephone: 0300 707 1229 / 4055 / 6220.

Monday to Friday, 8:00am – 4:00pm



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