Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Use of Children's Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO)

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Use of Children’s Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO)

Information for Parents and Carers

Community Surgical Appliances Services

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Fitting your child’s Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO)

- Sit with your child in front of you with their hip and knee bent.

- Pull up their socks and make sure there are no wrinkles in them.



- Turn your child’s foot towards the middle before bringing the foot up.

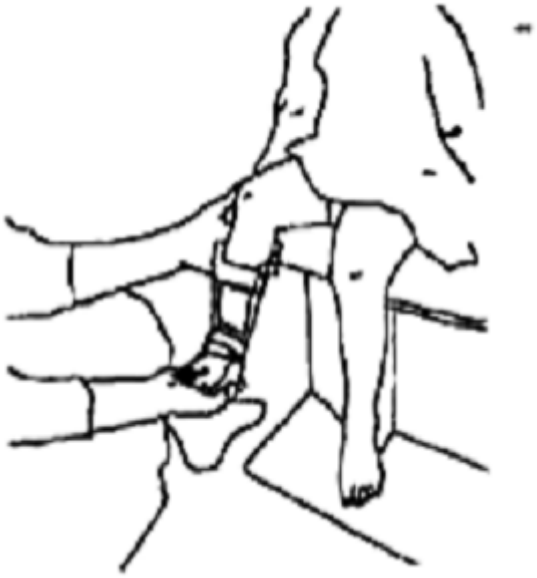


- Place your child’s heel at the back of the AFO then fasten the heel-retaining strap snugly.

- Check that your child’s heel is in place by lifting their toes.



- Finally, fasten the top strap and put on your child’s shoe.



Your orthotist will show you how to fasten any additional straps.

Finding footwear

The footwear your child wears with their ankle foot orthosis (AFO) is very important.

There are a few things that you should consider when deciding on footwear for your child such as:

- The need to always take the AFO with you when buying footwear for your child
- The need to consider at least one shoe size bigger for fitting
- Lace-ups and Velcro are preferable as they give the most adjustment
- A shoe with a lower opening down the tongue of the shoe is better
- A removable inlay is very useful, as removing the inlay can create more space for your AFO
- High heels are not desirable (1-1.5cm maximum), as the splint is set at a specific angle. If the heel is too high it can tip the knee forward too much.

Please speak with your child's orthotist if you have any difficulties finding footwear for your child.

How long should they be worn?

Your child may feel uncomfortable wearing their AFO at first, so they should be worn gradually using the following schedule:

Day one: 30-60 minutes

Day two: one-two hours

Day three: three–four hours

Day four: four-five hours

Your orthotist or physiotherapist will advise you on how long your child should build up to wearing them and what activities to wear them for.

What about red marks?

You should check the skin around your child's foot and ankle every time you take the splints off.

It is normal to see red marks where pressure has been applied. These should disappear within 30 minutes.

If you notice any sores or blistering to your child's skin you should stop using the splints and contact your physiotherapist or orthotist for advice, as the splints may need adjusting.

Long socks can help to protect your child's skin.

How do I clean my child's AFO?

- Your child's AFO should be cleaned with a damp cloth and towel-dried, as heat will distort the shape.
- Do not soak it or use any detergents.
- Any fluff or hair can be picked out of the Velcro straps.

Contact information

Your child's orthotist is: .....

If you have any further questions or you would like to make or amend an appointment, please contact the Surgical Appliance Department on the following numbers:

Leigh 0300 707 4055

Wigan 0300 707 1229

Wrightington 0300 707 6220

We aim to respond to all messages the next working day.

Useful Contacts

British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (BAPO):

www.bapo.com

Telephone: 0845 166 8490

SCOPE: For disabled people achieving equality www.scope.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 003 333

HemiHelp: For children and young people with hemiplegia.

www.contact.org.uk/hemihelp

Telephone: 0845 123 2372

International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO)

www.ispoint.org

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