

# A guide to your spinal and abdominal supports



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## What is a spinal or abdominal support?

A spinal or abdominal support is a brace worn around the torso to control and support the spine and pelvis. They are usually made of fabric with stiffeners inside, like a corset.

## What does a spinal or abdominal support do?

Spinal and abdominal supports are used to reduce movement of the joints and muscles in your back, and support weak muscles. They are effective at controlling lower back pain and hernias, and can also help treat osteoporosis.

## How do you put on a spinal or abdominal support?

Your orthotist will demonstrate how to put a spinal orthosis on your child. The most important things to remember are:

1. Put on a cotton top which covers the whole surface area between your skin and the brace. There should be no creases in the garment – any excess material should be pulled round and gathered at the opening of the device.
2. Open out the support and place it centrally on your spine. This is easiest to do whilst standing, but if preferred you can sit or lie down instead.
3. Pull the sides of the support round your torso and fasten securely. The straps should be tight enough so that the brace doesn't slip.

## Skin care

It is important that you regularly check your skin, especially in the first couple of weeks. Some red marks are normal; however, if the reddening is severe or if there is any blistering or breakage of the skin, you should stop wearing the device and contact your orthotist.

## Caring for your spinal or abdominal support

Like any orthosis, the lifespan of a spinal or abdominal support depends on how often it is worn and how well it is cared for.

Many supports can be washed – check the washing instructions on your device for detailed instructions.

You should check the support frequently for signs of wear and tear. If you notice any significant damage or if the fastenings are wearing out, contact the Orthotic Department to arrange for a repair. Do not try to adjust the support yourself.

If you feel the device is no longer properly supporting you, contact your orthotist.



**Your notes:**