

A guide to your spinal orthosis



Opcare

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A brand of the AM Healthcare Group

What is a spinal orthosis?

A spinal orthosis is a brace worn around the torso which supports your spine and pelvis.

The spinal orthosis will be designed to meet your specific needs – as each person is unique, so is their response to treatment.

What does a spinal orthosis do?

A spinal orthosis controls the movement of your back and supports the spine and pelvis. A spinal orthosis can be used:

- To aid healing of fractures
- To reduce pain
- To reduce motion of the joints, ligaments and muscles in your back
- To support weak muscles
- Post-operatively

How do you put on a spinal orthosis?

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

1. You should wear a cotton top underneath the brace, covering the whole surface area so there is no direct contact between the brace and your skin. There should be no creases in the garment – any excess material should be pulled round and gathered at the opening of the spinal orthosis.
2. Ensure the straps are all fastened securely so the spinal orthosis does not move around when worn.

How long should you wear a spinal orthosis for?

Your orthotist will advise how long you should wear your spinal brace for. It takes a while to get used to wearing a spinal orthosis, and it may feel uncomfortable at first. Gradually build up the length of wear time, until you can wear as required.

Day 1 and 2: 1 hour

Day 3 and 4: 2-4 hours

Day 5 and 6: 4-6 hours

Day 7 and 8: 6-8 hours

Day 9 and 10: 12+ hours

Day 11+: wear the brace during the day
and at night time up to 23 hours

You should stop wearing it if it is causing severe pain or discomfort.

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.

In particular, you should check the skin thoroughly over bony areas, under the arms and across the top of the thighs.

Caring for your spinal orthosis

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

You can prolong the life of your spinal brace by keeping it clean and dry. To clean the brace, wipe it lightly with a damp cloth. Do not soak in water. Dry the brace with a towel or leave it to dry naturally.

Do not expose the spinal brace to excessive heat; for example, do not dry it on top of a radiator or by a fire.

The Velcro® straps and lining can be replaced when they wear out.

If you feel the orthosis does not fit you properly, you should contact your orthotist. Do not try to adjust the brace yourself.