

WHAT TO EXPECT ON YOUR JOURNEY TO GETTING A NEW ORTHOSIS



Paediatric Orthotic Information Guide



Opcare

Enhancing your ability

A brand of the AM Healthcare Group

Welcome to the Opcare Orthotic Clinic

We are here to help you understand all about Orthotics!

Can you tell us about yourself?

Name: _____ **Age:** _____

Here is a drawing of me:

My interests and what I like doing are:

My goals are:

Why do I need to visit the Orthotic Clinic?

People use orthotic devices or orthoses, for many reasons, but usually they are special devices that aim to help or support our bodies when moving, sitting, playing or pretty much any of the activities that we get up to.

An orthosis is something that you wear to help correct the shape of your body or correct the way a certain body part moves. Don't worry, we see a lot of children and we choose what is best for you and teach you everything that you need to know about your orthosis.

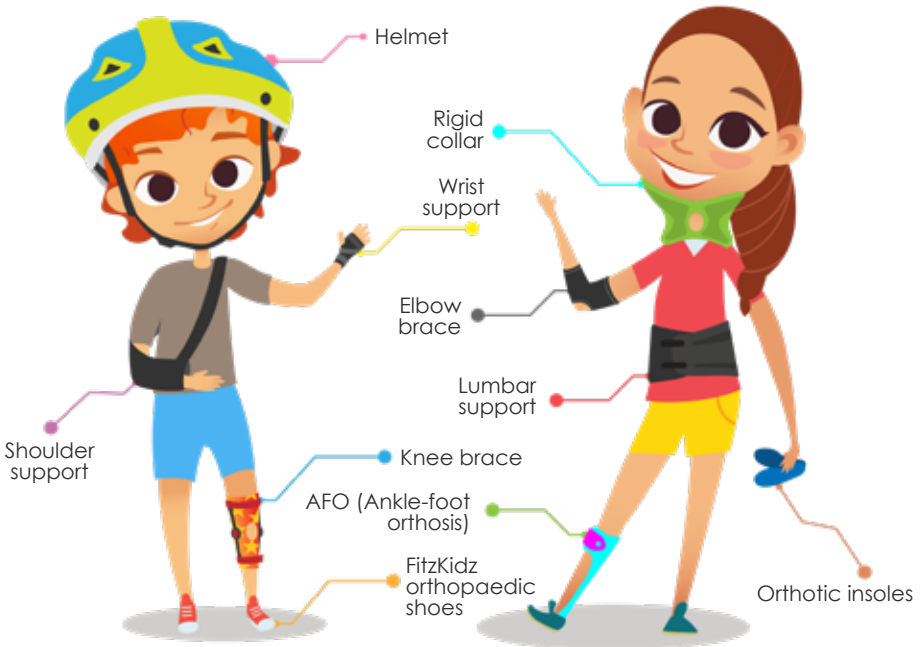


Types of orthoses

We make all kinds of orthoses depending on what each of the children we look after need. An orthosis can be a pair of shoes or insoles that help support our feet and legs or a brace that we wear on another part of our body – heads, shoulders, knees and even toes!

An orthosis can be made of a variety of materials but, no matter what, it is there to help you specifically. We use special plastics, leather (often for shoes) and foams of all shapes, sizes, colours and stiffness. Often you can choose from the available colours and graphics so you will end up with something that is unique and amazing - just like you!

Here are a few examples of different orthoses:



First visit and Goals

On your first trip to the orthotic clinic, we will want to learn all about you – filling in this booklet will be really helpful!

It is really important that we find out all of the things you struggle with and in particular, what you want to be able to do – we often call these goals. After you read this booklet, can you think about these things and bring the filled in booklet along for your next appointment, please?

A goal usually involves:

- An **activity** that you want to do
- What type of **assistance** you might need and whether you might use some kind of aid in doing the activity
- The **time** you spend doing the activity or **distance** if it is something like walking
- How **often** you would like to do the activity

An example might be:

ACTIVITY = TO WALK OUTDOORS
ASSISTANCE/AIDS = BY MYSELF WITH A FRAME
TIME/DISTANCE = TO THE PARK
OFTEN = AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK

Meeting the Team

You will meet a few different people at the clinic, but don't worry about that, we're all here to help you. We want to understand what the problem is and we will come up with a way to fix it. People you may meet:

Orthotist – this is someone who designs and fits orthoses to people, including children.



Physiotherapist (Physio) – this is someone who will help build your confidence when wearing your orthosis, so that you can get the very best out of it.

Podiatrist – this is someone who specialises in feet and legs. They work with the orthotics team on a regular basis where these parts of the body are involved.

Occupational Therapist (OT) – this is someone who also helps people that use an orthosis in places such as a school, a nursery, and around the house.

Consultant – this is a special type of doctor who helps make sure that you are fit and well to make the most of using an orthosis.

Do you need an orthosis at all?

Sometimes, children that come to see us don't need an orthosis and we can give you some suggestions of shoes or simple insoles, for example that you can buy from the shops. This is often the easiest solution and saves you trips to the hospital.

Off-the-shelf orthoses

An orthosis can be something we need to get from special suppliers – a bit like buying from a shop, but not a shop that you find in towns or shopping centres. We can provide you with one of these devices if we all, including you, think it is the best for you.

These are called off-the-shelf or stock orthoses. We will talk to you about what options there are and, together choose a size and style that will suit you!



Custom-made orthoses

Sometimes, we need to make an orthosis that is designed specifically for you. This means that we need to take some precise measurements or maybe even take an impression or scan of the part of your body we are trying to help.



We will use this to design an orthosis that is made especially for you. The design that we create is sent to a workshop to be made – this will be so that it fits you and nobody else – your own unique orthosis.



Fitting

If it is your first orthosis or you are having a new custom-made orthosis, we may ask that you come back to the clinic to try the orthosis before it is complete – a bit like a dress rehearsal.

This allows us to make sure the orthosis fits well and we can make adjustments if we need to.

If we are fitting you with a knee brace, please wear loose trousers or bring along some shorts. That will make fitting much easier.



Some of our custom-made orthoses:





Taking your orthosis home

When you take your orthosis home, we will give you a leaflet that gives you some tips on how to use and look after the orthosis. Usually, we ask people to build up wearing time with the new orthosis – think about when you get a new pair of shoes. You often have to get used to the new device, even if you have had one in the past.

Sometimes, we will plan for you to spend time with another member of the team (physio or OT) who will help you learn how to use the orthosis, for example, some of the orthoses that people use to help them walk are more successful if you get some exercises or games to play. Don't worry, we will help you and if you have questions – just ask one of the team!



Maintenance

Once you have taken the orthosis home, we hope you will use it as much as you need to. We also know that you will need to come back to the clinic from time to time.

This will be because of two main reasons – you have grown or, if you are using it regularly, it will occasionally need a bit of a repair.

We can see you for repairs quite quickly – just give us a call and we will see you in clinic!

You will probably grow over time and we can adjust the fit in clinic but, in time we will likely need to remake the orthosis to keep up with you! We always provide support for you if you need it and you can contact your orthotist or the clinic at any time.



We are here for you!

My Orthotist's name is: _____

I can call them on: _____

I can email them on: _____

Further information

There are numerous sources of additional information available to support children and families across a wide range of conditions that may require orthoses. We have listed some below.



- **www.stepsworldwide.org**. Steps is the leading charity working for all those whose lives are affected by childhood lower limb conditions. Everything they do is about valuing and supporting individuals, families and carers affected by conditions which have an impact on the legs, hips or feet.
- **www.kids.org.uk**. KIDS is a national charity, founded in 1970, that provides a wide range of services to disabled children, young people and their families in England. We support children from babies through to young adults, whatever their disability.
- **www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk**. The Children's Trust gives children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability the opportunity to live the best life possible by providing specialist rehabilitation, education and community services across the UK.

- **www.newlifecharity.co.uk**. Provides advice and funding for disability equipment.
- **www.shoewap.com**. A global marketplace where people with unevenly sized feet and amputees buy, sell and exchange mismatched pairs and single shoes.
- **www.contact.org.uk**. Offers support to families and professionals caring for disabled children.
- **www.citizensadvice.org.uk**. Offers advice on benefit applications and other topics such as disability discrimination and taking time off work to care for your child.
- **www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-discrimination-act-2005-new-laws-to-help-disabled-people-easy-read**. Information on the Disability Discrimination Act and the provision that schools must make to help children back into school.
- **<https://www.youtube.com/user/stepscharity>** - Steps channel.

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Parent/Guardian Guide

The aim of this booklet is to share some simple information to help your child understand what to expect when attending the orthotic service. It is important to note that no two people have exactly the same experience and every patient presents in their own way.



The booklet has links to further sources of information, please check these yourself to ensure that they are suitable for you as we do not create, maintain or add to these links. It can be useful to read this booklet together with your child and use page 18 to jot down questions you may have – don't worry about asking questions, even if you think the information has been covered previously. There is a lot of information to take in and we welcome questions at any time.

Feel free to speak to any of the team at the clinic about the information provided and if you have any comments or suggestions – we would love to hear them.

<https://www.opcare.co.uk/get-in-touch>



www.opcare.co.uk