

Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis (KAFO) Use and Care Instructions

A Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis (KAFO), sometimes called a "long leg brace" is a custom made brace used to support muscles, immobilize joints, or correct the position of your knee and ankle. Your KAFO may perform some or all of these functions. A KAFO may be made of metal, thermoplastic or a combination of materials.

How to Use Your Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis:

- If there is a thermoplastic ankle and foot section to your KAFO, you will need to wear a lace-up shoe that has enough room for both your foot and the brace to fit comfortably.
- Wear a cotton sock between your skin and the brace. The sock should be long enough to cover your entire calf.
- Your orthotist may have provided you with a special full-length sock to wear. The sock will absorb perspiration and help protect your skin.
- When you first try to walk with your brace, you may feel awkward. Practice in your home or with a physical therapist before you walk outside.
- Begin wearing your brace for one hour at a time, then take it off and rest your leg. Alternate wearing the brace and resting your leg for the first few days. Slowly increase your wearing time over the next several days.
- Check you leg for any red pressure areas. Any reddened area that does not fade after 20 minutes should be watched carefully. This is especially important for patients who are diabetic or have poor sensation in their leg.
- Call your orthotist if you have any concerns.
- Do not become discouraged if you feel an adjustment is needed. A minor adjustment might be needed to ensure a good fit. Call your orthotist to discuss this.

How to Care For Your Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis:

- Clean the thermoplastic sections at least once a week using mild soap, and rinse well.
- Metal joints will require periodic lubrication. Ask your orthotist what type of lubricant to use.
- **Important Notes About Your Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis:**
- A KAFO is a very specialized device. It is VERY important to keep all follow-up appointments made by your orthotist. Schedule an appointment at our office if any unexpected problems occur.