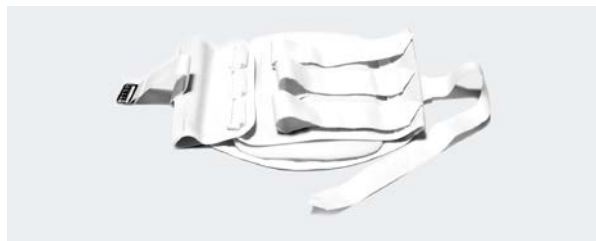


Guidelines for the use of abdominal and spinal supports

What is an abdominal support?

An abdominal support (corset or brace) is usually made with fabric materials and prescribed to provide control and support to the spine and pelvis. It has many aims:

- To steady and limit motion of the joints, ligaments and muscles in your back
- To support weak muscles
- To support vertebrae which have structural weakness
- When there is an abdominal hernia which needs supporting to prevent it increasing in size



How to fit fabric spinal support

When the support is supplied the orthotist will instruct you how to fit it. The support can be worn next to the skin and needs to be worn firmly.

1. Make sure the rigid steel struts are shaped to follow the shape of your back and inserted into the casings provided
2. Centralise the garment to your back at the waistline and secure the fastening i.e. one strap or hook and eye to hold the corset in the correct place, starting at the bottom strap
3. Loosely fasten all straps, hooks & eyes or zip from the bottom edge upwards
4. Check that the support is still centred correctly, and then tighten up the straps or lacing, once again starting at the bottom edge. This helps to lift the abdomen into the correct position
5. Next, fasten and tighten the band and strap to give pressure to the lower back and abdomen

How to fit abdominal support

When the support is supplied the orthotist will instruct you how to fit it. The support can be worn next to the skin and needs to be worn firmly.

1. The front of the support should be offered to the abdomen, if you have any collection bags, care should be taken when passing bag/s through the support
2. Fasten the bottom strap of the support first, this will hold the support in place allowing you to ensure the position is correct, the fastening straps are normally located to the side of your support
3. Fasten the remainder of the support straps, adjusting as required
4. Finally fasten the fulcrum strap/s (broad strap/s extending from the front of the support fastening at the front or side)

Wearing your support

Your support should only be worn when it is needed i.e. when undertaking strenuous activities. Your support should not be worn all the time, as your body will become reliant on the support and eventually become weaker. It should be comfortable and giving the correct amount of support.

Allergies

Please be aware of allergies which may occur when your skin comes into contact with metals, rubber, plastic, natural and man-made fibres. If you have any problems with your corset, discontinue use and contact the department for a review appointment.

Cleaning and maintenance

- Do hand wash
- Do use a non-biological mild detergent
- Do not use a fabric conditioner
- Do not bleach
- After laundering, wrap the garment in a towel to absorb moisture and allow to dry naturally
- Do not tumble dry
- Do not dry in direct sunlight
- Do not dry on a radiator
- Do not iron

You should keep your support in good repair. The Orthotics Department can repair it, e.g. replace worn fastenings or elastics. Please return it clean.

Eligibility

You are entitled to two functional supports. The current prescription charge for an abdominal or spinal support is £44.55. You will have to pay more if you wish to own more supports above your NHS entitlement. Please contact the department for a quote and advice. Items will only be replaced by the NHS if the current supports are not repairable.

Contact us

Tel: 0300 131 4500 ext. 8547 or ext. 4909

Orthotics Department
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
Level 3, Conquest Hospital
The Ridge
Hastings
TN37 7RD

Consent

Although you consent for this treatment, you may at any time after that withdraw such consent. Please discuss this with your medical team.

Sources of information

British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (BAPO)

Sir James Clark Building, Abbey Mill Business Centre, Paisley, Renfrewshire, PA1 1TJ

Tel: (01415) 617217 or 08451 668490

Website: www.BAPO.org

Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4500 Ext: 734731 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: 0300 131 4500 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Philip King, Orthotist

Carole Crathern, Service Manager for Orthotics

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:

Out of Hospital Division

Next review date: August 2021

Responsible clinician/author: Melanie Burgess, Orthotics Team Lead

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