

Guidelines for the use of spinal braces

Why do I need to wear a spinal brace?

There are three most commonly used spinal braces within the Trust:

- Underarm (TLSO)
- Over the shoulder (TLSO)
- Hyperextension or Jewett brace

The reasons that patients need to wear a spinal brace vary. They may include trauma, a post-operative or pre-existing condition e.g. rheumatoid arthritis.

How long do I need to wear the spinal brace for?

Your doctor will tell you how long you need to wear the spinal brace. For trauma and post-operative patients this is normally 12 weeks from the date of injury/surgery.

Your spinal brace must be worn at all times when you are out of bed. It does not need to be worn when lying down flat.

How to I put the spinal brace on correctly?

When the Spinal brace is supplied the orthotist will adjust all straps to the correct position and instruct you how to fit your spinal brace. The support can be worn next to the skin and needs to be worn firmly.

Underarm TLSO correct position:

- Place spinal brace under the body whilst lying on a bed
- **Front** – position the lower triangle shaped pad on the pubic bone, the upper pads rest on the sternum or chest bone
- **Rear** - position the lower pad on top of your bottom and the two steel uprights either side of the spine
- The underarm spinal brace has 4 fastening straps. The lower strap fastens around the waist which should be fastened first. To do this, use the plastic buckles not the Velcro. The upper strap fastens around the lower rib cage. Pass the Velcro strap through the plastic loop pulling the strap firmly ensuring that the front upright follows the mid line of the body.
- To take the brace off, this can be achieved by undoing two fastening straps only (they both need to be on the same side)
- The pads can be removed; hand washed and allowed to dry, before reattaching them



Over the shoulder TLSO correct position:

- **Front** – position the lower triangle shaped pad on the pubic bone, the upper pads rest on the sternum or chest bone
- **Rear** - position the lower pad on top of your bottom and the two steel uprights either side of the spine
- The brace has six fastening straps. The lower strap fastens around the waist, this should be fastened first. To do this, use the plastic buckles not the Velcro. The upper strap fastens around the lower rib cage. Pass the Velcro strap through the plastic loop pulling the strap firmly ensuring that the front upright follows the mid line of the body.
- Your arms can be passed through the shoulder straps as you put the rear of the brace under you, or can be fastened after the waist and chest straps. The straps are pulled forward and the Velcro attached to the lower rib cage strap
- To take the brace off, this can be achieved by undoing two fastening straps only (they both need to be on the same side), you will also need to release both shoulder straps
- The pads can be removed; hand washed and allowed to dry, before reattaching them



Hyperextension TLSO correct position:

- The front small rectangular swivel pad needs to sit on the chest bone. The lower sprung section sits over the pelvis. The rear rectangular pad sits in the small of your back
- The brace has one fastening strap. Place the plastic 'keyhole' onto the metal pin (right hand side of brace). Fasten the hinged plastic clip (left hand side of brace) until you hear a click. This puts the brace under the correct tension
- To take the brace off reverse the above procedure
- The pads can be wiped clean with a damp cloth

Can I shower?

If you wish to shower you must proceed with great caution, with a wet floor there is a potential for you to slip. You are advised to have a shower with someone there to assist you. Get into the shower wearing your brace, remove it before you shower and pass it to your helper. After showering, dry yourself and reapply the brace before getting out of the shower.

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 spinal brace, discontinue use and contact the department for a review appointment.

Eligibility

You are entitled to one spinal brace. You will only have to pay if you wish to own more above your NHS entitlement. Please contact the department for a quote and advice.

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. If the brace is not repairable, it will be replaced.

Contact us

Tel: 0300 131 4500 ext. 8547

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

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