

Guidelines for the use of cervical collars

What is a cervical collar?

Cervical collars help stabilise your spine, restrict movement and hopefully reduce pain in the affected area. Your collar has either been custom-made or adjusted for your use only. Do not adjust it or fit it to anyone else.

Your collar may be custom moulded from a plaster cast, or a stock item which has been customised for you to give support at the level that is needed. The reasons that patients need to wear a spinal brace vary. They may include trauma, or a post-operative or pre-existing condition, such as rheumatoid arthritis.

How long do I need to wear the collar for?

The orthotist or consultant prescribing the collar should tell you when and how long to wear the collar. If your brace was supplied as an outpatient, the length of time it is to be worn is specific to you and your condition. Your orthotist or consultant will clarify this.

Your collar should be worn when you are sitting or standing. It can be removed when lying down unless you are told otherwise. The collar needs to be fastened well, so that your chin is well supported.

If you are unclear how to get your collar on and off, please contact the team.

Cleaning and maintenance

Please keep your collar in good condition. You may have a removable liner inside the collar which has specific cleaning instructions from the manufacturer and should be supplied upon receiving the collar. If you require a replacement of this, please contact the orthotics department. The outside of all collars can be cleaned with a damp cloth. Do not use heat to dry your collar as it may distort the shape. Do not use any detergents or soak the brace.

Repairs

If you are a long-term user, you may return your collar to the orthotic department for repairs to the fastenings or linings if required. Please clean the collar before bringing it in for repair or adaptation. If it is in an unreasonable state, it may be refused.

Allergies

Allergies may occur when your skin meets metals, rubber, plastic, natural and man-made fibres. If you have any problems, discontinue use and contact us for a review.

Eligibility

You are entitled to one functional collar and replacement pads when necessary. You will only have to pay if you wish to have more. Contact the team for a quote and advice.

Contact us

Orthotics team: 0300 131 4787 esh-tr.orthotics@nhs.net

Level 3, Conquest Hospital

Level 2, Eastbourne District General Hospital

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)
NHS Orthotic Managers Group

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 on our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net.

Hand hygiene

We are 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 our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or 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

Lesley Baker, Head of Podiatry & Orthotics

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

Community Health and Integrated Care

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