

## Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO) Information Leaflet

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### What is an AFO?

An **AFO** is a type of orthosis designed to control your foot and ankle to improve your walking pattern and slow down the development of contractures. AFOs can also be known as splints. Your AFO will be made/supplied to suit your individual needs.

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### Putting on your AFO

It's important to apply your AFO correctly to ensure comfort and prevent rubbing or pressure marks.

- Always wear a **close-fitting long sock** between your skin and the AFO.
- Make sure your **heel is firmly positioned** at the back of the AFO.
- Fasten all **straps securely**.
- Once fitted, **put on your footwear** over the AFO.



AFO Fitting Video

[Watch a video about fitting an AFO.](#)

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### Footwear advice

The shoes you wear with your AFO are important for both comfort and function.

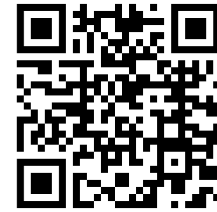
When choosing footwear, please consider the following:

- Always **take your AFO with you** when buying new shoes.
  - You may need to **choose a shoe wider or longer than your normal shoe size**.
    - **Lace-up or Velcro fastening** shoes are preferable as they allow better adjustment.
    - Choose shoes that **open low down opening** for easier fitting.
    - **Removable insoles** can create extra space for your AFO.
  - Avoid **high heels** — a heel height of **1–1.5 cm** is ideal. If possible try to avoid very flat shoes.
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### Cleaning and care

- Wipe the AFO with a **damp cloth** and towel dry.
- Do **not soak**, use detergents, or apply heat as this can distort the shape.
- Remove any **fluff or hair** from the Velcro straps regularly.

[Watch a video about orthosis care and repair.](#)



Cleaning and Care  
Video

### Wearing schedule

Your AFO may feel strange at first so you should gradually wear them in using the following schedule.

- Day 1: 30-60 minutes
- Day 2: 1-2 hours
- Day 3: 2-3 hours
- Day 4: 4-5 hours

Your Orthotist will tell you how long you should build up to, or what activities to wear them for. Some people wear them for a few hours, while others wear them all day or at night.

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### What problems should I be aware of?

If you notice any of the following, please contact the Orthotics department as soon as possible. If attending the orthotics department for a review please remember to bring your AFO for review.

- Skin redness that doesn't fade after 30 minutes
- Sores or blisters on the skin
- Pain, irritation or rubbing
- Any damage to the AFO

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### Advice on driving

To drive with an AFO, you must inform your insurer and tell them to make this part of your insurance agreement. Failure to do this may invalidate your insurance.

You may prefer to not wear your AFO for driving and fit this when you get out the car.

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**Contact details**

**Orthotics Department – Outpatients Zone 1, Clinic 7**

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🕒 **Opening hours:**

Monday – Thursday: 08:30 – 16:30 (Friday: 08:30-16:00)

[www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/orthotics](http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/orthotics)