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INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSIS (AFO) or KNEE ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSIS (KAFO)

You have been fit with an Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO) or Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis (KAFO), as prescribed by your doctor. It is extremely important that you follow the specific instructions given to you by the medical professional that is working with you, as well as following the guidelines below. The purpose of this device is to provide ankle and/or knee stability. Following are some commonly asked questions regarding this device:

DO I HAVE TO WEAR A SOCK WITH MY DEVICE?

Yes, some type of interface must be worn between your skin and the orthosis. A cotton type sock is preferred. Nylon may suffice, but provides less padding and absorption of perspiration. Keeping the skin clean and dry is important for comfort and hygiene.

WHAT TYPE OF SHOE WILL I NEED?

Do not use your device without a shoe! Due to the slickness of the plastic, wearing the orthosis without a shoe is dangerous. An athletic or oxford type shoe works best. The shoe must have a tongue, with a lace or Velcro closure across your instep to hold your foot within the device. Your orthosis was designed for a standard ½” heel rise, and must be worn with a shoe. Changing the heel height of the shoe can affect the function and stability provided. Be cautious about using the device in different shoes. You may need to obtain a wider shoe, have your existing shoe stretched, or have the insole removed to allow adequate room for the device. Most orthotic devices are not for sleeping purposes, please do not sleep with the device on unless specifically instructed to do so.

HOW DO I KNOW IF IT FITS CORRECTLY?

A properly fitting orthotic device should not cause sharp or stabbing pain, nor should it create bruises, calluses or blisters. You should initially begin use of the orthosis on a gradual basis. By checking your skin frequently at first, pay closer attention to the areas along the edges of the plastic, along your arch and ankles. Redness that does not fade within 10-15 minutes after removing the device can be a sign of excessive pressure, especially if over boney anatomy. If redness, pain or swelling develop, please discontinue use immediately and contact your orthotist. Failure to do so could lead to open sores, infection, or other complications.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE:

Most orthotic devices can be cleaned with mild soap and warm water using a cloth. Rubbing alcohol may be used for disinfection. The device should be towel dried and allowed to thoroughly air dry. Keep the brace away from excessive heat to prevent damage to the plastic. Try to keep the Velcro straps free of hair and lint by closing them when not in use. If the straps wear out and need to be replaced, please contact your orthotist. Do not attempt to modify your own device – doing this will void the warranty. Inspect your device daily for any signs of damage or wear, such as cracking or loose parts. A yearly recheck is advised.

WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL YOUR ORTHOTIST?

- If you see areas that are causing skin irritation, rubbing, blisters or bruising.
- If you undergo significant weight or volume change that causes your device to fit too tight or too loose.
- If you experience pain, numbness, or tingling from the device.
- If you have any problems with your device; discontinue using it immediately and contact your orthotist.

Signature: _____ Date: _____