

## Useful Contacts

- British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (BAPO)  
www.bapo.com  
Telephone 0845 166 8490
- The Stroke Association  
www.stroke.org.uk  
Telephone 0845 303 3100
- Multiple Sclerosis Society  
www.mssociety.org.uk  
Telephone 0808 800 8000

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www.ouh.nhs.uk

## Department of Orthotics



### Your Orthotist is.....

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## Guidelines for the use of your Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO)

## Putting on your AFO

Ankle Foot Orthoses are designed to hold your foot and ankle in a straightened position. This might be to improve your walking, to give you a stable base for standing, or to prevent deformity.

It is important that you put your AFO on properly to make it comfortable and prevent it rubbing.

- A thin close fitting cotton sock should be worn between your skin and AFO.
- Your heel should then be firmly inserted into the AFO and the straps fastened securely.
- Your footwear should then be fitted around your AFO.

If you have problems putting on your AFO please contact your orthotist for further advise.

## Finding Footwear

The footwear that is worn with your AFO is very important. There are a few things that you should consider when deciding on footwear.

- If you are buying footwear always take the AFO with you.
- Lace ups or Velcro are preferable as they give the most adjustment. The lower they open down the tongue of the shoe the better.
- Some buckle shoes are suitable but offer less adjustment.
- A removable inlay is very useful.
- In most cases high heels are not desirable, 1-1.5cm maximum. As the splint is set at a specific angle too high a heel can tip the knee forward too much.

If you have any difficulties finding footwear then please speak with your Orthotist.

## Using and Cleaning

Your Orthotist will tell you how long you should wear your AFO for.

You should begin by using your AFO for short periods perhaps 1 hour, removing it to check for signs of pressure or rubbing (particularly around the foot and ankles). There might be some redness or marking, this should disappear within 20 minutes or so. Build up the use gradually and continue to check, if you think a blister might develop then return to see your Orthotist to have your AFO adjusted.

The AFO should be cleaned with a damp cloth and towel dried, excessive heat will distort the shape. Any fluff or hair can be picked out of the Velcro straps or they can be replaced by the orthotic department as required.