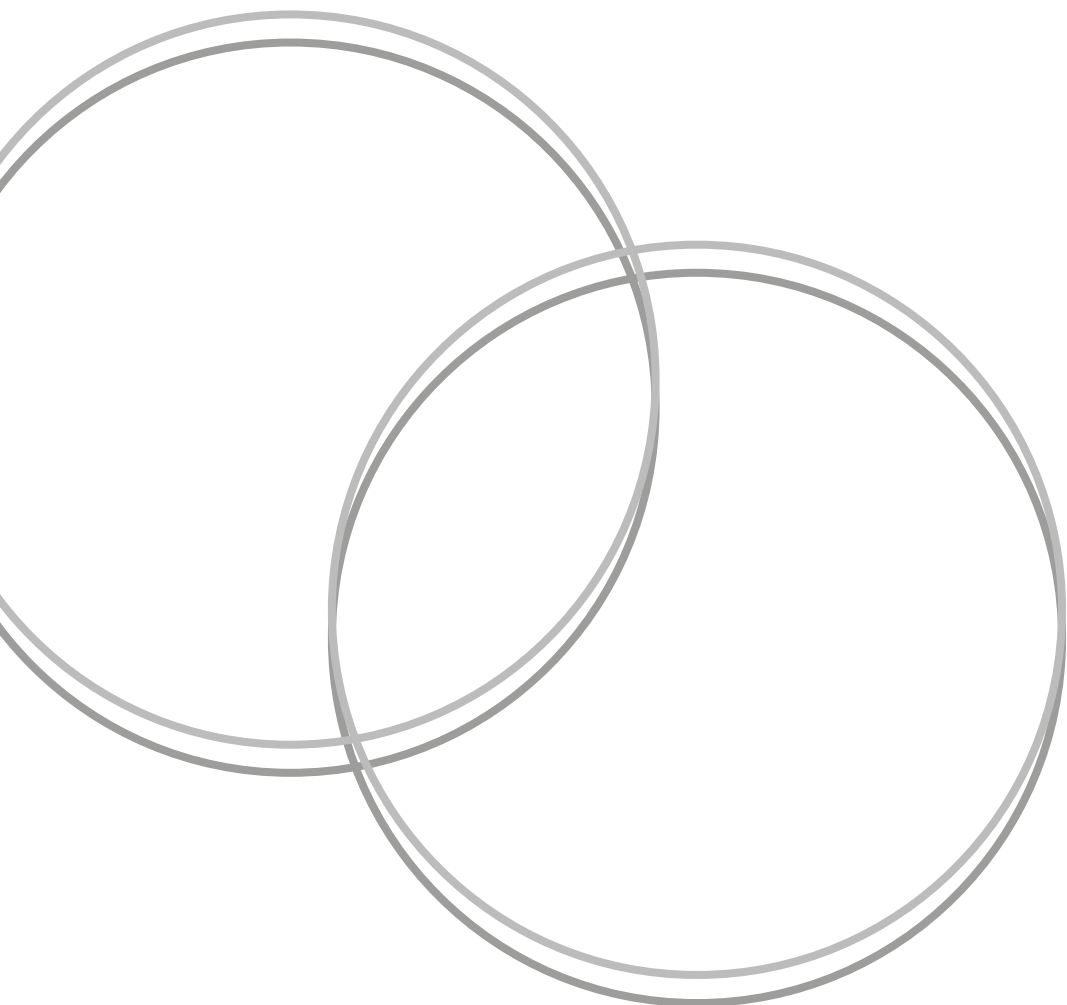


Knee Ankle Foot Orthoses (KAFO)

Information for patients



What is a KAFO

A KAFO is a full-length leg support that is designed to support the knee and ankle. This might be designed to:

- Prevent your knee from giving way if weak.
- Prevent movement at your knee that is unhelpful or painful.
- Provide stability to help your walking.

Wearing your KAFO

If you are wearing a KAFO for the first time, you will have to wear it for short periods and gradually increase the length of time you wear it to allow your skin, leg and posture to become accustomed to it. You should increase the use as you are able to tolerate it, your Orthotist will help advise you regarding this.

Before each use you should inspect the KAFO to ensure that knee joints move freely without much resistance and to check any locks are working correctly. You should also check that it is structurally sound and there are no defects. A lot of force will be going through the KAFO so it is important that it is checked regularly.

When on your leg:

- Make sure that all straps are fastened securely.
- Check the KAFO is attached to or into your shoe securely. A lace up shoe is recommended.
- Fully straighten your knee to check that the knee lock is working properly.

If there are any defects or the joints are not locking securely do not use the KAFO and contact the Orthotics department to arrange for it to be checked.

Caution

It is normal for there to be some red marking of the skin when you remove your KAFO, usually where the straps have been fastened or at the top edge of the brace. Any marks should disappear within 30 minutes. If there is persistent red marking of the skin, discontinue wearing the KAFO until you have contacted the department for advice, it is likely you will need a review appointment.

If part of your KAFO is broken or if the knee hinges fail to lock, discontinue using it and immediately contact the orthotic department for a review appointment.

Worn knee joints can cause the KAFO to give way without warning if not locked correctly. We recommend that you check the locking mechanism before you put the KAFO on and also when you stand up, to ensure correct and safe function.

Your KAFO has been prescribed and designed for you. Please do not modify it yourself.

KAFO provision

You are normally provided with one KAFO. A second one will be provided if you need the device long-term, it is deemed to be clinically effective, and you are unable to function without it. We will replace KAFOs when they are worn and beyond repair.

Care

Please keep your KAFO well maintained:

- If necessary, the plastic or leather can be cleaned with a damp cloth.
- Periodically clean any fluff from the knee joints using a cotton bud and lubricate it with WD40. Take care not to get any excess oil on your clothes!
- Keep it away from direct heat.
- Any fluff or hair should be picked out of the velcro to improve its grip.
- If the knee joints or straps become worn/loose then hand it into the Orthotic Department reception for repair. Please include: Your name, date of birth, address and your clinician's name. Repairs can take at least two weeks; we will contact you when your KAFO is ready to be collected.

Maintenance

Like any mechanical device the knee hinges will become worn with use and possibly become less secure. In extreme cases the knee joints can give way without warning if not locked correctly. To minimise the risk of this we recommend you return the KAFO every 6 months for a maintenance check. Please contact the Orthotics department to arrange this.

Your Orthotist is

Contact details

Orthotics Department

Tebbit Centre
Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre
Windmill Road
Oxford
OX3 7HE

Call us using the following telephone numbers:

01865 227 570

01865 227 575

01865 227 707

01865 227 760

01865 227 604

Telephones will be answered from 8.30am to 3.00pm.

E-mail: orthotics.department@ouh.nhs.uk

Website: www.ouh.nhs.uk/orthotics

Notes

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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