

## PLASTIC/POLYMER AFO

A plastic ankle foot orthosis (AFO) is a custom made device to provide support and/or protection to the lower leg. It is often used to compensate for muscle weakness and/or nerve damage resulting in instabilities and/or lack of coordination in the leg, as well as for immobilization to promote healing. The AFO is commonly used for the following conditions: drop foot, arthritis, achilles tendon rupture, cerebral palsy, stroke, MS, spina bifida, CMT, Polio, and more. Unlike the metal AFO, the plastic AFO contacts the leg from the foot up through the calf and is not indicated for individuals with fluctuating edema, neuropathy, and/or a history of sores and skin sensitivity. The AFO should only be worn by the person for whom it was prescribed, custom fabricated for, and only according to your physician's instructions

### Application

1. Apply knee high socks.
2. With straps open on the AFO, bend/flex the knee and scoop your foot into the AFO until the heel is well seated.
  - a) If putting AFO on a child, extend the toes and push down from the knee to ensure the heel is well seated.
3. With the heel seated, secure all straps snug.
4. Remove the insole from your shoe to allow for enough room for both your foot and the AFO inside the shoe. Then apply the shoe. You will need to use more force than usual to get the shoe on and may need to wiggle the shoe and/or use a shoe horn to assist in application. Do Not use in backless shoes.
5. Secure Velcro/laces on shoe snug.

### Wearing Instructions

1. Always wear a shoe over your AFO for standing and walking, one with Velcro or lace closures will work the best.
  - a) Only exception-If your AFO is for night time use ONLY, you do not need to wear a shoe in bed.
2. Break-In schedule: While this device is custom made for you, it may still require a gradual break-in period to build up a tolerance. Begin by wearing the AFO for an hour or two at a time while doing low to moderate activities. Check your skin when you remove the AFO for any signs of irritation. If everything appears okay, continue to lengthen the wear time and increase your activity as you feel comfortable. If you experience any rubbing, blisters, or red marks that do not go away in 20-30 min, an adjustment is needed, call your Orthotist.
3. Some mild muscle soreness is common within the first couple weeks of use as the AFO is changing your typical walking pattern, making some muscles work a little harder and some not as hard.
4. You will have the best results when using your AFO regularly.

### Care Instructions

To clean the AFO, wipe with a damp cloth, antibacterial wipes, or rubbing alcohol. Do not submerge the AFO in water as it will cause the pads and straps to prematurely become worn and/or develop an odor. Ensure the AFO is completely dry before putting it back on.

Please contact your Orthotist at the nearest Westcoast Brace & Limb facility with any questions or concerns that you may have.



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