

# Pediatric

# AFO

While being fitted with your plastic ankle foot orthosis (AFO), your orthotist will instruct you on how to wear and use your orthosis effectively. Some key points to follow:

The AFO you have received is made of a flexible but durable plastic. It includes dorsum pads which fit under the top edges of the AFO and are intended to keep the plastic from pinching the child's foot.

## Applying and Removing

- Begin by pulling back the plastic on the top of the AFO, and ensuring that your child's heel is seated in the heel of the device. This is important, for the fit is dependent upon the heel being seated properly in the AFO.
- After seating the heel you should have a gap between the top of your child's foot and the plastic. Place the dorsum pad under the plastic and snugly secure the straps.

## Proper Fit

- AFOs that fit properly will hold your child's foot in midline in order to maintain stability and control.
- The forefoot of the AFO is designed to allow for growth in both length and width. When initially fit, you should see some extension of the AFO beyond the toes. The AFO will also be slightly wider than your child's foot, therefore you must pull the plastic up against the foot and then secure the straps.

## Break-in Schedule

- We recommend that you check your child's foot every hour throughout the first day and intermittently increasing wear for the first 4 to 5 days.
- Red spots may be noted and should disappear within a half hour.
- You may notice red spots in different places on your child's foot depending upon his/her activities. If the red spots begin progressing into skin breakdown, please notify us immediately.

## Shoes

- Low or high cut athletic shoes will work with AFO's. You may have to go 1/2 to 1 full size larger than your child normally wears. We recommend a wider shoe rather than a longer shoe to accommodate the AFO.
- If needed, the soft inlay of the shoe can be removed to allow for greater depth in the shoe.
- Applying the shoe may take a little more force than you would normally apply. This may be accomplished by a slight twisting action to get the child's foot inside the shoe. Be patient and careful when inserting the child's foot into the shoe.

## Cleaning

- Clean the AFO with a mild detergent and warm water. You may use a soft brush to clean the AFO. Towel dry or air dry. DO NOT use direct heat such as a hair dryer, as this may deform the plastic.

## WARNINGS:

If the AFO's are cold, do not open them suddenly or they may crack.

Any pressure that may cause deep grooves in the plastic may cause the AFO to fracture.

**CAUTION: DO NOT ATTEMPT TO ADJUST OR REPAIR THE AFO ORTHOSIS YOURSELF.**