



# ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSIS

*Understand your condition.  
Know your next steps.*

## ***Wear-in schedule***

It is necessary to follow a gradual increase in wear to build up your skin and soft tissue tolerance to the brace. Begin by wearing the brace two times for one hour the first day. Add one hour to each wearing period until you are comfortable wearing the brace full time during the day and do not experience any red marks or pressure sores on the skin.

## ***Skin care***

Check your skin after every wear period for any new signs of redness or irritation. This is especially important if you are diabetic or have a lack of protective sensation in your feet or legs. Your brace should fit snugly but not cause any pain, bruises, or blisters. Some amount of pinkness is expected in areas of maximum correction or support. Any redness should disappear within 15 minutes of removing the brace. If you feel

pain, or if redness on your skin lasts more than 15 minutes, call the office to schedule a follow-up appointment to have the brace adjusted.

It is important to keep your skin clean to avoid irritations. Mild soap and water are recommended. Do not use lotions, oils, or ointments under your brace. If needed, use sparingly and allow to dry before putting the brace on.

## ***Clothing***

Always wear a snug cotton sock or stocking underneath your brace. Smooth out all wrinkles, because they can cause irritation. If you perspire excessively, you may want to change your socks frequently.

For expert advice on how to stay healthy and active, visit [summitortho.com](http://summitortho.com).



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## **Footwear**

You must always wear a shoe with your brace, because it is ineffective without one. The shoe should be sturdy and supportive; slippers, loafers, and some sandals may be inappropriate. Your brace may not fit all of your shoes but it can be modified to fit most casual shoes that are accommodating.

## **Tips for stairs**

- » Use a railing if one is available.
- » If you have someone assisting you, he or she should be below you when moving either upstairs or downstairs.
- » If you are using a cane, before you step, move the cane up first or down first.
- » If you are using crutches, move them up after you step upward, and down before you step downward.

## **Care of your brace**

- » Do not expose your brace to extreme temperatures (such as a closed car on a hot, sunny day).
- » Occasionally check for signs of wear. If you think repairs are needed, call for an appointment.

## **WHEN TO CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT**

You should see a bracing specialist for a follow-up appointment within a few weeks of receiving your brace. Please call if you notice the following:

- » You have developed red areas or pressure sores from your brace
- » You have had a significant weight change and your brace is too loose or too snug
- » You are experiencing new pain in other areas of your body (knees, hips, or back)
- » The straps or Velcro no longer hold tight, or other material is worn
- » You have any questions or concerns

*Never attempt to adjust or repair the brace yourself.*

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