



Medical Device

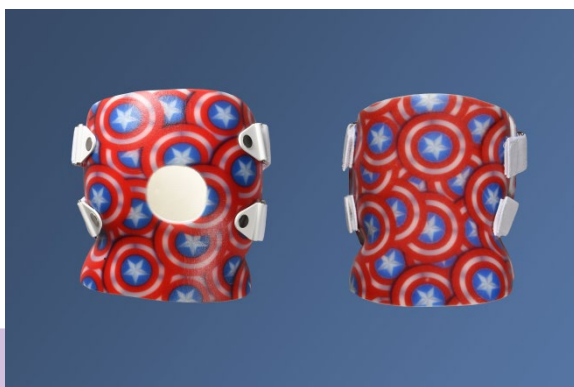


# Bi-Valved Brace for Scoliosis

## Wear and care guide for patients

Scottish National Spine Service (SNSS)

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Your child has recently been fitted with a new Spinal Brace to help their posture and control the position of their spine. This is a custom medical device which has been designed for use by your child only. This leaflet will provide some information on how to apply the brace, look after your child's skin, and maintain the brace.

It may be necessary for your child to use their Spinal Brace in conjunction with other medical devices such as a wheelchair or ankle braces. If this is the case your Orthotist will make sure their brace fits well alongside these.

## Applying your child's brace

### Method 1:

- Position your child safely on a firm surface such as a bed ensuring they have an appropriate, clean vest on.
- Detach the front section from the back ensuring the straps are all tabbed back on themselves and not tangled.
- With your child in a sitting position lie the back section of the brace behind them on the firm surface.
- Lay your child back into the brace aligning their waist with the waist of the brace. If necessary, reposition your child in the back section of the brace.
- Once the back section is fitting correctly, apply the front section. First fasten the middle straps evenly and then fasten the bottom and top straps.

The link below shows a video with some useful tips for putting on your brace:

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/scottishnationalspineservice/brace-useful-tips/>



## Method 2:

- This is an alternative method if your child is not able to sit up safely.
- Again ensuring a safe place and that vest and brace are prepared as above.
- Log roll your child on to their side and slide one side of the back piece underneath them, and then roll them back to lying on their back. Check that their waist is within the waist indentation of the brace, you may need to reposition your child for this.
- Once the back section is in the correct place, apply the front section. First fasten the middle straps evenly and then fasten the bottom and top straps.

At this stage ensure any feeding tubes etc are well located within cut out if appropriate. Fit should also then be rechecked once the child has been transferred into their seating system.

## Removing the brace

### Method 1:

- Ensure your child is lying in a safe and secure position.
- Remove any clothing that may hinder removal of the brace.
- Unfasten all straps tabbing them back on themselves. Remove the front piece.
- Your child can then be helped to sit forward, removing the back piece from behind them. Reverse of method 1 above.
- Alternatively your child can then be log rolled on to their side for safe removal from behind as reverse of method 2 above.

- Check your child's skin for any marking or redness that is not usually there.
- Check the brace for any wear and tear.
- Make sure the brace is stored in a secure place.
- Any concerns should be reported to your Orthotist.

## **Breaking in the brace**

Your Orthotist will discuss an individual wear in regime which will suit your child best. This should ideally be over a few weeks and aim to increase wear time day to day. Your child's daily routine and any interventions will be considered.

Keep the brace on for the agreed time and then remove and check your child's skin. It is important to become familiar with normal pressure areas and what is acceptable skin marking. Their skin may appear pink in certain areas - your Orthotist will point these out. If skin marking is not of concern, then aim to wear the brace a little longer the next day.

Also be mindful that brace wear can be tiring for your child initially and may affect their normal behaviour whilst they adjust.

If you have any concerns, please discuss with your Orthotist.

## **Successful brace wearing**

Brace should be worn through the day and be used in conjunction with the appropriate seating to improve posture and general sitting balance.

Possible benefits can include better head control and upper limb function as well as improving chest function. However this can differ from Child to Child. Please discuss with your Orthotist if you have any concerns.

Brace can be removed for feeding, changing and any other interventions such as Physiotherapy.

More information on bracing can be found on the Scottish National Spine service website link below:

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/scottishnationalspineservice/brace-useful-tips/>

## Skincare

- Shower/bathe daily.
- Always wear a Boston T or any alternative snug-fitting, long t-shirt/vest underneath the brace. Make sure there are no wrinkles before applying the brace.
- Do not use creams, lotions or powders under the brace as they will soften the skin. However if these are essential to your child's care then allow approximately 1 hour for these to absorb before putting the brace on.
- Take special care of any gastrostomy buttons or similar devices. Your Orthotist will ensure they have adequate space within the brace.
- Nappies, if required, should always be worn underneath. With general clothing over.
- Pay special attention to any areas of skin which are pink, as this indicates pressure. It is normal for the skin to be pink at the waist, but it may indicate that a review is needed if the skin is pink in other areas (such as the ribs) or if it begins to look like the skin might break.
- Sometimes the skin over the waist and hips gets darker. This is common and should fade once brace treatment is complete.

## **Cleaning the brace**

It is important to clean the foam liner of the brace daily. The foam will not absorb moisture; however, perspiration will collect on it. Wipe inside and out with a damp cloth/anti-bacterial wipe. Rub the lining with alcohol gel and leave to dry. Stubborn marks on the outside can be removed with nail polish remover. If the fabric straps become soiled please contact the department to have them replaced.

## **Planned reviews**

Your Orthotist will discuss your specific follow up plan but generally your child will have a review appointment for their brace up to 3 months after fitting. This appointment may involve an X-ray and will allow us to assess your child's progress in their brace.

A plan will always be in place for your next appointment. This may be by specifically booking a date and time but may also be through our Planned Repeat List (PRL) process.

## **Unplanned reviews**

If your child experiences any problems with their brace such as discomfort, redness or skin break down you should contact your Orthotist immediately.

## **How long should my child's brace last?**

Your child has been supplied with one spinal brace and the length of time it lasts will depend on how quickly they grow. These are some signs that your child's brace is getting small:

- Brace not going on as easily.
- Straps not fastening as easily as before.
- Discomfort and tightness where it has not been before.

- Red/abraded marks or bruising on the skin from discomfort (ribs and hips in particular).
- Brace is short under arms, chest and not offering the same level of postural support.

It is important we resolve any issues with fit or comfort quickly to ensure the brace continues to perform as intended. Please also notify us of any issues or incidents you have had in regards to the brace even if you have managed to resolve these at home.

## **Brace repairs**

It is important to check you brace regularly for signs of wear and tear:

- The buckles and straps should all be attached securely.
- The Velcro should be strong and stay fastened securely.
- All edges of the brace should be smooth.

We would ask that you call should the brace need repaired in any way. This can often be done by our workshop without the need for an appointment with your Orthotist.

## **Disposing of the brace**

Once your child's brace has been outgrown and replaced you are welcome to keep it. However if you chose not to, your Orthotist will dispose of it. Unfortunately we are not able to reuse or recycle the brace in any way. If for any reason you have to dispose of the brace at home, please make sure it has no information that would identify you. It can be disposed of in your non recycling bin.

The contact details for our department are:

Orthotist Name:

The Orthotics Department

SMART Building

Astley Ainslie Hospital

133 Grange Loan

Edinburgh

EH9 2HL

Telephone: 0131 537 9177 (option 2)

Job Number:



Unique Device Indicator



Single Patient  
Multiple Use



Keep away from direct  
sunlight/heat sources



Keep dry - protect from moisture



Consult instructions for use (IFU)

**For a copy of this booklet in larger print, Braille, or your community language (Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Urdu or Polish), please call 0131 536 9434.**