

Scottish National Spine Service (SNSS)

The Orthotic Service



A Guide for Patients

The Orthotic Service provides care for children and young adults with a range of spinal curve differences.

What is an Orthosis?

An orthosis is an externally applied device used to modify the structural or functional characteristics of the neuro-muscular and skeletal systems.

What is an Orthotist?

An Orthotist is an Allied Health Professional (AHP) who has completed a certified course of education and training to design, measure and fit an orthosis. An Orthotist is also approved to do so by a regulatory body known in the UK as the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

Why have I been referred to Orthotics?

You have been referred to Orthotics as your Consultant feels you would benefit from a spinal brace. We have various types of custom braces to treat various types of curve. Your Consultant and Orthotist will decide what type of brace you will get, considering factors such as the cause of the curve, the position of the curve and whether you can stand independently.

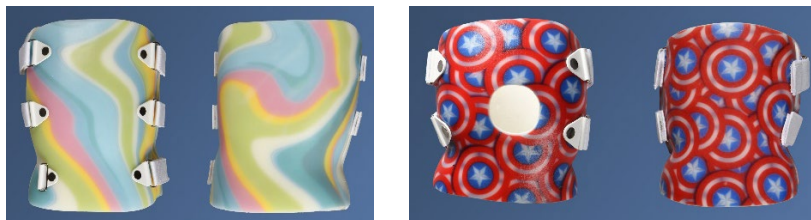
Types of brace

Custom Boston Style Brace



This is a corrective brace and generally used to treat idiopathic curves. It is worn for 20 hours every day until the end of growth. It is important to note that this brace will not correct your curve but aims to stop or slow down the progression. This allows normal growth to continue.

Bi-Valved Jacket



This is a postural brace which works best in conjunction with a seating system. It is worn through the day only. It will not correct the curve but uses the flexibility in the curve to improve sitting position. It has many potential benefits including improving respiration and digestion and encouraging better head and upper limb control. It can also accommodate feeding tubes etc..

Custom Post-Op Brace



A custom Post-op brace will offer protection for growing rods. It is worn through the day only.

All these braces, apart from the Post-op braces have a similar assessment and casting process as explained below:

Step 1: Your consultant will refer you to orthotics, sending a copy of your most recent spinal X-ray. Your referral will then be triaged in order of priority.

Step 2: At the point we are able to offer an appointment you will be contacted by the Orthotics department with an initial telephone consultation to discuss a treatment plan.

This phone consultation will be with your named Orthotist and where possible they will aim to follow you through your treatment journey. They will talk you through the process and what to expect at the initial appointment. You will be given a date for your assessment/ casting appointment. This appointment will be held at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh or at the Royal Hospital for Children & Young people. Please check your appointment letter for the location and allow 40-60mins for this appointment.

Step 3: At this appointment you will meet your named Orthotist who will discuss the process with you and answer any questions. They will explain to you which type of brace you will receive and why.

Step 4: You will then have a plaster impression taken of your spine using our unique casting frame. The casting/ measuring process for the Post-op brace may vary. Taking a cast ensures your brace will be unique to your shape and as comfortable as possible. The frame also ensures the best possible position of your spine. There will be at least two Orthotists present for this procedure. We advise you to bring along a clean change of underwear and if you have long hair please tie it back. Anything that will make this appointment easier for you is also encouraged such as a favourite soft toy or music/ cartoons.

See link/ QR code below for the Scottish National Spine service website which contains a video of the casting procedure.

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/scottishnationalspineservice/your-bracing-journey/>



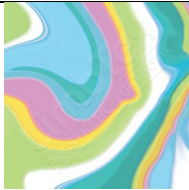



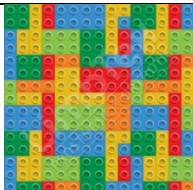




Step 5: You will be seen again approximately one month later to fit your brace. This appointment will be at our main department which is the SMART Centre within the Astley Ainslie Hospital. This is where your brace was made, which means our technicians will be available to help during the fitting process. You will leave with your brace and a 3 week wear in regime. We will provide you with advice on clothing and using the brace at school along with some advice leaflets. Please allow up to two hours for this appointment.

Step 6: We aim to see you back with your Consultant 6-10 weeks after fit of your brace. Your Orthotist will arrange this and will confirm date and location. At this appointment you will have an x-ray in your brace to see the effects of the brace on your curve. If any adjustments are needed, they will be done at this time.

Step 7: Your Orthotist will then advise on a follow up plan which depends on how quickly you are growing and how long your brace is likely to last. However, you are able to contact the Orthotics department at any time, including between any of the above steps, if you have any questions or problems.

Please be aware that Post Op braces can often follow a quicker timeline but this will be dependant on diagnosis and treatment.

Below are some of the pictures/designs you could choose for your new brace.

		
Swirl Pastel	Dinosaurs	Shields USA
		
Blue Unicorns	Building Blocks	Graffiti Love
		
Spider on Web	Football White	Flames Blue

Please see website for most up to date list and all other resources.

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/scottishnationalspineservice/>



Contact us

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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.