

# **Wearing your Spinal Brace after Surgery**

**Wear and care guide for patients, parents and carers**

Scottish National Spine Service

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## **Why have I been given this leaflet?**

This leaflet has been developed to give you information about wearing your brace following your spinal surgery.

Ideally you will have been measured and fitted with your brace prior to your surgery. Please remember to bring it with you on your day of admission.

## **How will wearing a brace help?**

There are many factors that will dictate how quickly you are back on your feet (start to mobilise) after your surgery. The physiotherapists and nursing staff will help you with this whilst you are on the ward, until you are more confident. Once your wound is sufficiently healed, it is important that you start wearing your brace to support you as you start to mobilise more. Your brace should be put on (applied) when sitting over the edge of your bed or when standing.

Your brace will help keep your back in a good position and protect it whilst it continues to heal.

## **Wearing a brace**

If your shape has changed during surgery then you will require a review with an Orthotist for some adjustments. This can be arranged and carried out whilst you are still on the ward.

It is important you feel comfortable in your brace and that it remains secure whilst you mobilise and sit. It is also important that you or a family member feel confident in putting the brace on correctly. Your Orthotist will talk you through the process.

We advise on a long, snug fitting vest for under your brace. This will protect your skin and prevent any pressure issues. Normal clothing can then be worn over the brace.

Your consultant will provide a specific wear pattern but, generally, your brace should be worn while you're moving around, from first thing in the morning until the evening. It can be taken off while lying down as it may not be comfortable to lie in. Once you're able to shower or bathe, your brace should also be removed.

It is important that if you start to get any discomfort, notice any wear and tear on the brace, or just need some further adjustment, that you contact the Orthotics Department as soon as possible.

## **Looking after my brace**

In terms of maintaining your brace we ask that you wear a clean, dry vest every day, tab Velcro straps back on themselves to prevent tangling, and if any area becomes dirty use a cleaning wipe to clean it. Specific washing instructions may be labelled on your brace.

Depending on the clinic where you're scheduled for your check up after your operation, we may be available to review your brace during that visit. Your consultant will guide you on how long you should continue wearing it.

**You have been fitted with:**

**Your  
Orthotist is:**

## Contact details

The Orthotics Department  
SMART Building  
Astley Ainslie Hospital  
133 Grange Loan, Edinburgh EH9 2HL  
Telephone: 0131 537 9177 (option 2)

## Further information

For useful tips about your brace and how to use it, please visit <https://services.nhsllothian.scot/scottishnationalspineservice/brace-useful-tips/> on the Scottish National Spine Service website or **scan the QR code** here.

