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## **Orthotic Care and Wear Instructions**

### **Knee Orthosis (KO)**

#### **General Description:**

The term KO is an acronym that stands for Knee Orthosis and describes the part of the body that this device encompasses. This device extends from approximately mid calf to mid thigh level.

There are many categories of KOs: Metal designs and plastic and metal designs. The metal design consists of a metal structure shaped to the limb and upholstered with leather at the points where the device makes contact with a person's body. The plastic and metal design is the one most frequently encountered today and is usually a plastic device custom molded to the person's body with metal components in key structural areas only. The reason for the increased use of the plastic and metal design is that it is lighter in weight and is considered to be more cosmetic.

#### **Application:**

Since there are many different reasons to use a KO, there are many different designs. Each design has its own special features and its own specific way to be put on properly. The orthotist providing the device will instruct the patient on the proper way to put the KO on to make best use of the design features of the device. Also refer to the instruction pamphlet that is supplied with the device.

#### **Cleaning and Maintenance:**

The best way to clean a KO is to spray the inside with rubbing alcohol and wipe dry to remove body oils and residue. It can also be cleaned by wiping it out with a damp towel and anti-bacterial soap or anti-bacterial moist towelettes. Be sure to remove any excess soap as this can cause irritation to the skin.

Many KO's are designed to be used in or out of water. Check with the manufacturer's instructions to see if water is harmful to the device. Keep the KO away from excessive heat to prevent damage to the plastic.



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## **Wearing Schedule:**

**Day One:** Brace should be worn for 1 to 2 hours twice a day. Check skin after use. Some small, light red marks may be noticed on the skin that should go away in 20 to 30 minutes after removing the brace. If redness is present and does not go away after 20 to 30 minutes or if you notice any scratching, bruising, or blistering, **do not put the brace back on**. Call immediately to schedule an appointment with your orthotist.

**Day Two:** Brace should be worn for 2 to 3 hours twice a day. Check skin after use. Some small, light red marks may be noticed on the skin that should go away in 20 to 30 minutes after removing the brace. If redness is present and does not go away after 20 to 30 minutes or if you notice any scratching, bruising, or blistering, **do not put the brace back on**. Call immediately to schedule an appointment with your orthotist.

**Day Three:** Brace should be worn for 3 to 4 hours twice a day. Check skin after use. Some small, light red marks may be noticed on the skin that should go away in 20 to 30 minutes after removing the brace. If redness is present and does not go away after 20 to 30 minutes or if you notice any scratching, bruising, or blistering, **do not put the brace back on**. Call immediately to schedule an appointment with your orthotist.

## **Risks and Benefits:**

### **BENEFITS**

- Stabilizes and supports knee ligaments
- Reduces knee pain

### **RISKS**

- May cause skin breakdown such as scratching, bruising, or blistering, which can cause serious complications if skin is not checked regularly or if device is not applied as directed.

## **Tips and Problem Solving:**

KO's can be worn directly against the skin for better suspension or over a cotton or neoprene sleeve for greater comfort.

Usually, the back straps just below the knee provide the most suspension on the calf. Be sure these straps are kept tight.

**If there are any problems or questions, please contact your orthotist.**