

## Useful organisations

**British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists (BAPO)** [www.bapo.com](http://www.bapo.com)

Tel: 0845 166 8490

**SCOPE** For disabled people achieving equality [www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

Tel: 0808 800 3333

**HemiHelp** For children and young people with hemiplegia [www.hemihelp.org.uk](http://www.hemihelp.org.uk)

Tel: 0845 1232372

**International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO)** [www.ispoint.org](http://www.ispoint.org)



## Contact us

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**Your Orthotist is:**

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To find out more about our Trust visit

[www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

NHS Orthotic Managers Group, May 2023

Next review due: May 2025



**Royal Berkshire**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Guidelines for the use of children's ankle foot orthosis (AFO)

Information for patients

Department of Orthotics

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**This leaflet gives advice to parents and carers of children who require an AFO orthotic device to hold their foot and ankle in a corrected position.**

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### **Putting on your child's AFO**

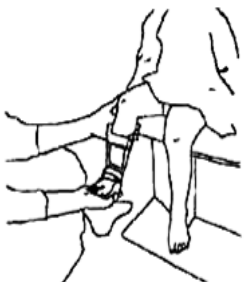
Sit your child in front of you with their hip and knee bent. Pull up their socks and make sure there are no wrinkles in them.

Turn your child's foot towards the middle before bringing the foot up.

Place your child's heel at the back of the AFO, then fasten the ankle strap snugly. Check that your child's heel is in place by lifting his or her toes to see.

Finally, fasten the top strap and put on your child's shoe.

There may be additional straps, if so your orthotist will show you how to fasten them.



### **Finding footwear**

The footwear that is worn with your child's AFO is very important. There are a few things that you should consider when deciding on footwear.

- If you are buying footwear, always take the AFO with you.
- You will need to consider at least one shoe size increase for fitting.
- Lace ups and Velcro are preferable as they give the most adjustment. The lower they open down the tongue of the shoe the better.
- A removable inlay is very useful. By removing this, you can create more space for your AFO.
- High heels are not desirable, 1-1.5cm maximum. As the splint is set at a specific angle, too high a heel can tip the knee forward too much.

If you have any difficulties finding footwear, then please speak with your orthotist. It is important to bring suitable footwear with you to the fitting appointment where possible, to allow the AFO to be fitted and adjusted on the day.

### **How long should they be worn?**

At first, the AFO may feel uncomfortable so they should be worn gradually using the following schedule.

**Day 1:** 30-60 minutes    **Day 3:** 3-4 hours

**Day 2:** 1-2 hours        **Day 4:** 4-5 hours

Your orthotist or physiotherapist will advise you how long you should build up to, or what activities to wear them for.

### **What about red marks?**

- You should check the skin around the foot and ankle every time you take the splints off.
- It is normal to see red marks where pressure has been applied. These should disappear within 30 minutes.
- If you notice any sores or blistering, you should stop using the splints and contact your orthotist for advice as they may need adjusting.
- Long socks can help with protecting the skin.

### **Cleaning**

The AFO should be cleaned with a damp cloth and towel dried, heat will distort the shape. Do not soak it or use any detergents. Any fluff or hair can be picked out of the Velcro straps.