

Guidelines for SMOs

Introduction

If this is your first orthosis, you may have some questions about its use and care. An understanding of the orthosis may ease some of your initial concerns.

The supra malleolar orthosis, or SMO, is a lower profile orthoses that provides stability for the subtalar and ankle joints in the frontal plane. They can also be used to limit motion in the sagittal plane, and can control forefoot deviations. Your SMO may be two stage, with a flexible inner boot, or single stage, with flexible construction and added padding, based on what will be the most comfortable for your specific foot. SMOs allow for more control than a simple arch support or UCBL but less than a full ankle foot orthosis. Due to their low profile, SMOs can usually fit within a normal pair of shoes. It may be necessary to purchase shoes one size up in width.

The following tips will make wearing your orthosis a positive experience, and will allow the orthosis to function properly.

General Wear

While donning the orthoses, it is important that the patient's knee is flexed and foot is relaxed. Spread the SMO in your hands by grasping the edges along where patient's mid-foot will be and the SMO curls over the foot. Next, slide the heel all the way back into the SMO making sure the knee stays flexed. Once the foot is in, gently squeeze the SMO and lay the straps down. Be sure not to pull the straps too far, this may cause the orthosis to rotate and cause pressure. Once the straps are tightened, the patient's skin should be touching the orthosis evenly and the heel should be clearly seated.

Many people are able to wear SMOs in their usual footwear. We do recommend a good quality shoe with a stable heel counter, but advise against a hightop shoe. A running shoe is usually best, but there are more casual options for teenagers and adults to wear with the SMOs. It may be necessary to purchase a shoe a size wider than your current shoe in order to accommodate the orthoses. Before wearing your SMOs, it is important to remove the insoles from your shoes. Doing this allows for more room in the shoes while minimizing the risk of secondary complications from things like leg length discrepancies and excessive pressure.

When you first receive the SMOs, the patient should wear them on a gradually increasing basis. Start with 2-3 hours of wear with an at least an hour off in between wear times. Do this several times a day as often as your schedule will allow. Every day add one or two hours until you achieve full time wear. This process generally takes one to two weeks. If the patient has worn SMOs or an AFO in the recent past there is no need to follow this schedule.

Redness along the edges of the SMO is normal and should not be a cause for alarm. If there is redness over the ankle bones, along the arch of the foot, or the base of the pinky toe this should be closely watched and brought to your orthotist's attention at the next follow up appointment. If any redness lasts more than thirty minutes after removing the orthoses, wear time should be scaled back and an appointment for adjustments should be scheduled.

If a patient is still growing, the SMOs should last 1-2 years depending on his/her growth rate. They are adjustable, and we will be able to accommodate some growth during this period.

Scheduled Visits

You should schedule a follow-up visit now that you have received your orthosis. It is necessary to be seen to make sure the orthosis fits properly, is providing the required support, and that it doesn't cause any undue pressure or discomfort.

Future visits and orthotic maintenance checks may also be set at a schedule determined by your individual needs. Following this time frame will offer you peace of mind and guarantee that your orthosis is providing maximum support, comfort, and assistance.

Questions

It is always best to contact your orthotist if questions arise about your orthosis. Our staff is ready to answer your questions and eager to fix any issues you may be having. We're here to give you the best possible care, so let us know how we can help.

Your orthotist is:
Jim P. Rogers, CPO, LPO

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(423) 648-4898