

## POTENTIAL PROBLEM AREAS

While most children tolerate AFO's/KAFO's well, some have trouble. Keep your orthotist aware of any issues that arise.

### Excessive sweating

Some children experience significant perspiration in their AFO's. If this occurs, try changing socks once or twice a day. You can also have your orthotist drill several small holes in the heel area of the plastic to aid in ventilation. There are also special socks that your doctor can prescribe that can help quite a bit. These can be obtained through your orthotist and may be covered by your insurance.

### Pressure Areas

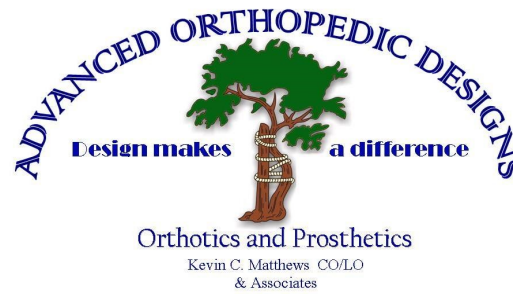
Your child's skin should remain the same or improve in their AFO's. Calluses, redness that doesn't go away within twenty to thirty minutes and blisters are uncommon, but need to be addressed as soon as feasible. If the child experiences a break in the skin or a blister, the AFO should be discontinued until the orthosis is fixed. If any of these situations arise schedule an appointment with your orthotist for an adjustment. If the problem remains unresolved call your physician for guidance. It is not true that callus formation is a normal process of getting used to orthoses.

As your child grows there is a good chance new redness may appear, so it is important to inspect skin regularly. Bath time is usually a good time to inspect the skin. If new redness appears that doesn't resolve quickly, schedule an appointment with your orthotist. This typically occurs 4-8 months after fitting. Worn out straps are typically also replaced at this time.

## "OUT OF THE BLUE" PROBLEMS

If your child has had his or her orthosis for a while (a month or more) and experiences pain, discomfort, redness...it could be that the orthosis was improperly applied. Check the orthosis for any malfunction like cracks, tears in straps...anything unusual. Visually check fit for anything out of the ordinary. If there are no problems with the orthosis, resume wear after the problem area clears up. Apply for an hour or two and check skin. If the problem returns schedule an appointment with your orthotist for an evaluation.

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All photos of the wonderful kids within are  
displayed with parental consent.

## Pediatric AFO/KAFO Introduction & Information

Your child's physician or physical therapist has recommended he/she be fit with a molded plastic AFO (ankle foot orthosis) or KAFO (knee ankle foot orthosis) for one or both legs. Orthoses, or braces, are custom made devices designed to support weak muscles, control muscular imbalances, correct poor skeletal alignment, prevent deformity, provide a stable base of support or other reasons depending on your child's individual situation.

You will need to schedule an appointment to see an orthotist to have the orthosis made. At your appointment your child will be evaluated and your orthotist will discuss the process with you. A mold, or cast impression, will be obtained. This is the model used to make the orthosis. This is typically a painless process, however your child may not take too well to the idea. It may help to bring something to amuse or comfort your child like a favorite toy or doll. The appointment usually takes about half an hour.

**It is best to ask if the company accepts your insurance when you call to schedule the initial appointment.**



## FABRICATION

Fabrication times vary depending on the facility, the insurance authorization process and the facility's current workload. It typically takes about two weeks but can range from one to four or more weeks. You may want to inquire about turnaround times when you schedule your appointment if time is important.

## Fitting

Once your child's orthosis is ready you will be contacted to schedule an appointment for fitting. You should bring the shoes your child will wear with the orthosis with you to the appointment if you have a pair with a little extra room. If you don't have appropriate shoes you may purchase new ones, a little big, and bring them. Make sure you save the receipt so you can return them if they don't work out. You could also wait to purchase shoes until after fitting. Your orthotist can make recommendations as to the style that will work best.

Sometimes, not often, shoes are difficult to find to fit with the orthosis. Special shoes can be ordered by your orthotist or can be found online. Some insurances cover them if you cannot find anything on your own. Some options are:

[www.hatchbacksfootwear.com](http://www.hatchbacksfootwear.com)

[www.bignwideshoes.com](http://www.bignwideshoes.com)

Following is a suggested break-in schedule to acclimate your child to the orthosis. Remember this is hard plastic and it can cause injury if not carefully monitored.

Skin condition must be monitored closely for the first two weeks. After two weeks, if there are no concerns, skin should be checked daily at bedtime or bath time for any problem areas. Small trouble areas can become big problems

## WEARING SCHEDULE

Please be aware the following is only a recommendation. Your orthotist, physician or therapist may have other recommendations.

For children who are first time wearers or are unable to communicate pain or discomfort you must watch more closely and diligently. On the first day of wear, the orthosis should be applied for 1/2 to one hour at a time two to three times. Skin should be inspected when the orthosis is removed and any red areas noted. Redness should clear up within twenty minutes. If not you should contact your orthotist for recommendation. On the second day, if there are no issues, double wear times of the first day. On the third day add thirty minutes to an hour to wear times and continue this process each day until you reach the recommended daily wear times indicated by your physician or therapist.



## PREVIOUS WEARERS

If your child has been wearing an AFO/KAFO and has just received a new one or pair and is able to communicate pain or discomfort, the breaking in process may be accelerated. Your child should probably not wear the orthosis to school for first 2-3 days unless there is someone there that will help your child remove and care for the orthosis (make sure they don't get lost). Skin should be checked each time the orthosis is removed for the first two weeks.

