

WINKLEY

orthotics & prosthetics

At Winkley Orthotics,
we specialize in custom-
fabricated adult and
pediatric orthoses. Our goal
is to improve each person's
mobility and enhance quality
of life by providing the
highest quality orthotic
care, non-operatively and
post-operatively.

- ◇ 740 Douglas Drive North, Golden Valley, MN 55422
763-546-1177 ◆ Fax: 763-847-9508
 - ◇ 910 East 26th Street, Suite 323, Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-863-8963 ◆ Fax: 612-863-8962
 - ◇ 280 Smith Ave North, Suite 311, Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-207-5465 ◆ Fax: 651-340-7676
 - ◇ 3960 Coon Rapids Blvd., Suite 116, Coon Rapids, MN 55433
763-421-3587 ◆ Fax: 763-506-9905
 - ◇ 140 N. Birch Street, Suite 104, Cambridge, MN 55008
763-689-0490 ◆ Fax: 763-689-0482
 - ◇ 2115 Craig Rd., Eau Claire, WI 54701
715-836-7944 ◆ Fax: 715-836-9536
 - ◇ 1321 South Main Street, Rice Lake, WI 54868
715-234-6622 ◆ Fax: 715-234-7879
- By Appointment Only:
- ◇ 2835 South Service Drive, Suite 206 Red Wing, MN 55066
651-212-6440 ◆ Fax 651-501-2009
 - ◇ 1601 St. Francis Ave, 2nd Floor, Shakopee, MN 55379
763-546-1177 ◆ Fax: 763-847-9508

1-800-WINKLEY
www.winkley.com

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Instructions
for your **NEW**
AFO

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Wear and Care

AFO = Ankle Foot Orthosis

What does it do?

Your new AFO is designed to support and align your foot. It can also help to prevent or correct a deformity, substitute or enhance function, and decrease pain or discomfort.

It is custom made to fit your body, and instructions from your orthotist should be followed carefully. Your orthotist and your doctor will determine the amount of time you need to wear your brace.

Break in schedule

It may take some time before you become accustomed to your new AFO. It is necessary to follow a break in schedule to build up your skin and soft tissue tolerance to the brace. Begin by wearing the brace just 1 hour the first day. The next day, wear it 2 hours. Double the time you wear your brace every day until you are comfortable wearing it all day and do not experience any red marks or pressure sores.

Clothing

Always wear a snug cotton sock or stocking underneath your AFO. Smooth out all wrinkles, because they can cause irritation. If you perspire

excessively, you may want to change your socks frequently.

Shoes

You must always wear a shoe with your brace, because it is ineffective without one. It is important that you wear a sturdy, supportive shoe; slippers, loafers and sandals may be inappropriate. Your brace may not fit into all of your shoes, but it can be modified to fit into most casual shoes.

Remove the inner liner of your shoe before putting the AFO inside of it. It is important that all of the shoes you wear with your brace have the same heel height. Too high or low a heel could put strain on your back or knees and cause you to be unstable.

Skin care

Check your skin everyday for red marks or pressure sores. This is especially important if you have diabetes or lack sensation in your feet or legs. Your brace should fit snugly, but not cause any pain, bruises or blisters. Some pinkness is expected in areas of maximum correction or support. Any redness should disappear within 15 minutes of removing the brace. Try wearing the brace again in an hour or two. If you feel pain or if the redness on your skin lasts longer than 15 minutes, call our office for an appointment to have your AFO adjusted as soon as possible. It is important to keep your skin clean to avoid irritations. Mild soap and water are recommended. Do not use lotions, oils or ointments under your brace. If

needed, use sparingly and allow to dry completely before putting the brace on.

Tips for the stairs

Use a railing if it is available.

Step up with the strong leg first; step down with the weak leg first.

If you have someone assisting you, they need to be below you, coming up or going down.

If you are using a cane, it goes up first or down first, before you step.

If you are using crutches, they go up after you step up, and down before you step down.

When to call the office

You may be seeing your orthotist for a follow up appointment within a few weeks of receiving your brace. Please call if you notice the following:

You have developed red areas or pressure sores from your brace.

You have had a significant weight change and your brace is too loose or too snug.

You are experiencing new pain in other areas of your body (knees, hips or back).

Your velcro no longer holds tight or other material is worn.

You have any other questions or concerns.

Never attempt to adjust or repair the brace yourself!