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## **PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR WEARING AND CARING FOR YOUR KNEE ORTHOSIS (KO)**

### **General Information**

Your custom designed Knee Orthosis (KO) will help correct and maintain the proper alignment and position of your knee. Lower Extremity alignment is vital for balance, protection, and distributing your body's forces through the lower extremity. Your KO will help stabilize your knee, resist mild to moderate medial/lateral instabilities, and reduce associated pain or gait deviations. You may experience slight discomfort as you adjust to the new orthosis and proper alignment position. The adjustment period normally ranges from one to six weeks.

The following wearing and care guidelines will help you be as comfortable as possible during this time.

### **Wear Time**

Unless otherwise instructed by your orthotist, start slowly. Adjusting to a new KO is like breaking in a new pair of shoes. Wear your orthosis one hour on the first day and limit yourself to low or moderate activities. Gradually increase your wearing time by one to two hours each day. You should also increase your activity level during this transition period. Soon you will be comfortable wearing your KO all day. You will achieve the greatest long-term benefits when you consistently wear your orthosis every day. Follow your physician's instructions regarding wear time of your knee brace.

### **Pain**

Remove your KO if you experience any pain or discomfort. Check your skin for areas of irritation. Some pinkness is expected in areas of maximum correction or support. However, redness should disappear within 20 minutes after the orthosis is removed. Try wearing the orthosis again after waiting for one or two hours. If you feel sharp, or jabbing pressure over bony areas, or if skin redness lasts longer than 20 minutes, make an appointment with your orthotist at Seacoast Prosthetics for an adjustment as soon as possible.

### **Skin Care**

Wash your legs every day with mild soap and warm water. Rinse your skin well with clean water. Towel dry your skin thoroughly. Check your leg carefully every day for any red or tender areas. Such areas could indicate that your KO needs an adjustment.

### **Care**

Your new orthosis is made from state-of-the-art materials. With typical moderate use and proper care, your new KO should last several years. Clean your KO whenever it becomes dirty or has an unpleasant odor. Wipe with rubbing alcohol on a cloth or you can use water and mild soap. Your KO is designed to be used in harsh environments unless otherwise noted. If it is exposed to saltwater or lakewater rinse thoroughly with clean water and allow it to dry at room temperature. Direct heat can damage your KO. Do not use a hair dryer or place it near a heater.

### **Remember...**

Never attempt to repair or adjust your KO yourself. Your orthotist will schedule periodic visits to make sure your KO is working properly. Contact Seacoast Prosthetics whenever you need help or have any questions. Your practitioner will work closely with you and your physician to ensure the best orthotic treatment possible.