

## If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print. Arrangements can also be made on request for it to be explained in your preferred language. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: [rjah.pals.office@nhs.net](mailto:rjah.pals.office@nhs.net)

## Feedback

Tell us what you think of our patient information leaflet. Please send your comments to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: [rjah.pals.office@nhs.net](mailto:rjah.pals.office@nhs.net)

Please note that any device supplied by the Orthotics Department is property of the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and should be returned to the department upon the end of its use unless advised otherwise. Do not dispose of any devices until they have been inspected by a member of the Orthotics team, or unless you have been informed to do so by a member of the team. In the event of loss or damage beyond expected wear, you may be asked to pay a replacement fee.

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Author: Abby Munro/Claire Pugh  
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The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt  
Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 7AG

Tel: 01691 404000  
Web: [www.rjah.nhs.uk](http://www.rjah.nhs.uk)



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# Information for patients Carbon Fibre Ankle Foot Orthosis



  
RJAH  
**Orthotics**

## Ankle Foot Orthoses (AFOs)

AFOs are prescribed for many reasons, including:

- To realign and control the ankle and foot joints.
- To offer support to weakened or weakening joints
- To limit or stop abnormal motion
- To offer protection
- To help control abnormal muscle tone

Carbon fibre is a material often used for orthotic devices it is strong whilst also being lightweight and is less bulky compared to plastic options. It can have different stiffnesses depending on the needs of the patient, and we can order many different types of design to suit a patient's needs. Your AFO will have a footplate inserted into your shoe, a stem, which can be on the inside, outside, or up the back of your calf, and either a calf band or a shin plate, depending on what your needs are. There will also be one or two straps to secure the calf section to your leg.

## Fitting and Footwear

Your AFO should always be used in a shoe, and not all shoes will be suitable to wear. Below are some tips on how to find the most suitable shoes to use:

- A lace or Velcro fastening is preferred for a secure fit.
- A shoe with a lower opening, where the base of the tongue is closer to the toes, will make putting the shoe on easier with use of the AFO.
- An insole should be put on top of the footplate to offer cushioning. Most footwear has a removable insole or one that is stuck down with double sided tape or a dot of glue. This can be removed to put on top instead of taking up further space within your shoe with an additional insole. If your shoe's insoles cannot be removed, a simple insole can be purchased from the orthotics department, with alternatives being available online, or from your local shoe shop or pharmacy.



## Care

Please keep your AFO well maintained:

- Pads can be washed as per the AFO instruction manual, and the AFO itself should be wiped down regularly
- Keep it away from direct heat and radiators
- If the hook and loop fastenings, straps or lining of your orthosis become worn, we can order replacements to collect.
- Please do not try to adapt the orthosis yourself
- Do not excessively flex the splint as this can cause breakage
- Your AFO has been prescribed for you and should not be given to anyone else as this could cause them problems

It is vital to check over your AFO regularly to look out for signs of wear. These signs include:

- Splitting, known as delamination, of the layers
- Cracks
- Whitening of the surface
- Reduced spring of the device, or the feeling of reduced support when walking

Areas of particular risk to breakdown are the base of the stem, where it connects to the footplate, and the toes. If you should come across any of the above signs of wear, stop wearing the AFO, contact the department and we will arrange a review or order a replacement.

## Contact

The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital

Tel: **01691 404442**

Below are the opening times for the department for dropping off/collecting footwear and appliances.

### RECEPTION OPENING TIMES

Monday – Thursday, 8.15am – 5pm

Friday, 8.15am – 4.45pm

### GENERAL ENQUIRIES

Monday – Thursday, 8.45am – 5pm

Friday, 8.45am – 4pm

The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital

Tel: **01743 261000 Ext: 3701**

Monday – Thursday, 9am – 4pm

Friday, 8.30am – 3pm

The Princess Royal Hospital

Tel: **01952 641222 Ext: 4224**

Monday – Thursday, 9am – 4pm

Friday, 9am – 12.30pm

**ALL SITES ARE CLOSED FOR LUNCH 12.30PM – 1.15PM**