

## ***Aljan Co.***

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### **KNEE ANKLE FOOT ORTHOSIS**

#### **ABOUT YOUR ORTHOSIS**

1. Your brace is designed to provide support and stability to your knee, ankle and foot. It has been designed to allow motion in positive directions, and limit movement in negative ones. This device was designed specifically for you, with your activity level, goals, and limitations in mind.
2. Your shoe is an integral part of this orthosis because it secures your foot into the KAFO, and provides a stable base of support for safe ambulation, or movement. Shoes with lace or velcro closures will hold your foot in position. Slip on shoes do not usually fit securely, which lessens the effectiveness of the brace, and could cause you to trip or fall.
3. Shoes need to be large enough to accommodate the brace, so take the orthosis with you when purchasing new footwear. It is easier to ensure the brace will fit and function properly in the new shoes if they are fit to the brace.
4. Shoes with removable insoles are helpful, as they can be taken out to create more room for the KAFO. The insole can be removed from the brace side, and the insole doubled up on the unaffected side. It will usually be necessary to buy shoes that are at least one to one and a half sizes larger than you normally wear to appropriately fit the KAFO. By doubling up the insole on the unaffected side, it will absorb some of the space created from the larger shoe size. Mismatched shoes (two different sizes) are also an option. Occasionally, extra depth shoes may be required to prevent pressure across the top of the foot, and a slight rocker sole can be useful, as well.
5. You should feel level when wearing your KAFO. You should not feel as though your foot is higher on the brace side. If this is the case, let your practitioner know so that appropriate measures can be taken to correct the discrepancy. Often, the problem can be rectified by simply adding a firm piece of material to the inside of the opposite shoe. If the height difference cannot be corrected with material inside the shoe, it may be necessary to modify the outside of the shoe. Other shoe modifications may be recommended by your practitioner to improve and complement the function of your AFO.
6. When you change shoes, be careful to maintain the same heel height. If the new shoes have a higher or lower heel than the height the KAFO was fabricated to, it might adversely affect your balance, causing you to trip and fall.

7. Clean, wicking socks such as Coolmax or other polypropylene fabric should be worn under the KAFO at all times. The sock should be longer than the brace, and snug. Wrinkled fabric may make the brace uncomfortable, and cause skin breakdown. Using a sock under the brace will be more comfortable, and help to reduce perspiration and irritation.
8. Clean your KAFO by wiping the plastic parts with a clean cloth using an antibacterial soap or medical alcohol. Antibacterial wipes may be used, also. If your device has knee and/or ankle joints, they should be lubricated with a drop of teflon lubricant monthly. A routine maintenance check should be scheduled every 6 months.

### WEARING AND USE OF YOUR ORTHOSIS

1. Follow the wearing schedule provided by your practitioner. The schedule is designed to graduate the wearing time to allow you to build tolerance to the KAFO, and allow you to check your skin. The time on the schedule includes both active and inactive time spent in the brace. Do not overuse the device, as skin breakdown may affect your ability to continue wearing the KAFO until the area has healed.
2. Each time you wear your brace during the break in period, you should remove your sock and check your skin. This is especially important if you have neuropathy, or other sensory loss. If you are unable to see you're the bottom of your foot or your leg, have a helper check the skin for you. If red marks are present, they should dissipate within 30 minutes of removing the KAFO.
3. Make sure that you are safe when you begin to ambulate with the brace. You may need to use a walker or cane for balance because the brace has changed the position of your lower extremity, which also changes your gait pattern.
4. Do not be discouraged if it appears to take longer than expected to build tolerance to the KAFO. Each individual has specific needs, and conditions that may affect the fit of and tolerance to the device. The KAFO should not hurt, nor cause skin breakdown, blisters or rashes. Since it is fabricated from rigid materials, adjustments may be necessary to to ensure optimal fit of the orthosis. Call for an appointment to have the KAFO adjusted if there are questions or problems.

**An appointment is required to make changes or adjustments to your device. Staff is available for emergency needs on weekends and holidays from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Call the number below for instructions on contacting the practitioner on call.**

**Please call if you have any problems with or questions about your device. Report any changes in your health or physical condition may affect the fit or function of your device, such as changes in weight or volume, muscle strength, or recent surgeries.**

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