



## **Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis (KAFO)**

### Use and Care Instructions

A KAFO is a custom molded plastic brace designed to stabilize weak muscles, immobilize painful joints, or correct the position of the foot and ankle.

#### How to use your Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis

- Wear with a lace up shoe that has enough room for both your foot and the KAFO to fit comfortably. Pay attention to the heel height: this will affect both the alignment and the way you walk. The heel height should be the same on all your shoes
- Wear a cotton sock between your skin and the KAFO. The sock will absorb perspiration and help protect your skin. A long sock that folds back over the top of the KAFO is best
- **PUTTING ON YOUR KAFO:** Position the KAFO on your leg and slip your foot and the KAFO together into your shoe, OR, place the KAFO into your shoe first, then slide your foot into the KAFO and shoe, using the KAFO like a shoe horn.
- When you first try to walk with your KAFO, you may feel awkward. Practice in your home or with your physical therapist before walking outside
- Begin wearing KAFO 1 hour at a time, then remove and rest your leg. Alternate wearing KAFO and resting your leg for the first several days. Become used to wearing the KAFO gradually. Slowly increase your wearing time over the next several days.
- It is VERY important to check your foot and ankle for any red pressure areas. Any red area that does not fade after 20 minutes should be watched carefully. This is especially important for patients who are diabetic with poor sensation in their feet. Call your orthotist with any concerns
- Do not feel discouraged if you feel an adjustment is needed. This is not unusual as minor adjustments may be required for optimum fit
- The knee joint may be locked or unlocked. Always be sure, when standing, that both joints are locked. One (1) locked joint will cause the orthosis to be unstable

#### How to care for your KAFO

- Clean the thermoplastic sections at least once a week using mild soap, and rinse well.
- Metal joints will require periodic lubrication, ask your orthotist what type to use

#### Important notes about your KAFO

A KAFO is a very specialized device and it VERY important to keep all scheduled follow up appointments made by your orthotist. Please do not hesitate to schedule an appointment should any problems arise. **SELF EXAMINATION:** A properly fit orthosis will exert a firm steady pressure and should never cause sharp or stabbing pain, bruises or blisters.