

Patient information factsheet

Daily collar care

We have written this factsheet as a guide to daily cleaning while you are wearing a collar. Please keep this factsheet in a safe place so that you can refer back to it. If you have any questions or worries, please ask a member of our team.

Daily cleaning

It's important to keep your collar and the skin beneath it clean. Daily cleaning will help to prevent skin irritation. Men may find it helpful to shave regularly as this will reduce irritation under the collar.

At home you should shower or bathe with the collar on. After washing you will need another person to help you remove the collar, wash underneath and change the pads. You should have at least one set of replacement pads. The pads should be hand washed in warm, soapy water and left to air dry.

Look for any redness or irritation under the collar, especially over bony areas like the chin, collar bones and back of the head. If there are any areas of irritation, check the collar is replaced properly with no plastic against the skin. If the problem continues please let us know. Do not stop wearing the collar.

How to remove your collar for washing (lying down)

Before removing the collar, your helper should check where the ends of the velcro straps are. When you put the collar back on, the straps should be in the same position.

Lie flat on your back in bed with one thin pillow and keep your head in a neutral position. Do not bend your neck forward, backward or from side to side.

Instructions for your helper

1. Undo the Velcro straps and remove the front of the collar.
2. Wash the front of the neck with mild facial soap and water and completely dry the skin. Check for any redness.
3. Clean the front of the collar and replace the soiled pads with clean ones.
4. Replace the front of the collar, ensuring the Velcro straps are equal and the collar is snug.
5. After the front of the collar is in place, the patient rolls onto their side. A pillow can be used to ensure the head is in alignment. The patient should keep their head still and hold the front piece of the collar in place under the chin.

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6. Undo the uppermost strap and pull down the back section of the collar to clean, dry and check the skin as before.
7. Reattach the velcro strap. The patient then rolls to the other side and the process is completed for the other side of the neck

How to remove your collar for washing (sitting position)

In some cases your doctor may advise you to change the collar and pads in a sitting position. In this case, begin by sitting up straight in a firm, upright chair

Instructions for your helper

1. Remove the velcro straps and take the front of the collar off. Make sure the patient does not talk, nod, or shake their head at this stage.
2. Clean and check the front of the neck for redness or irritation.
3. Replace the front of the collar as described above.
4. The patient should lean forward supporting the front of the collar with their hand. Undo the velcro strap on either side of the collar and fold the back over to clean and check the back of their head for redness or irritation.
5. Replace the back of the collar as described above.

Final checklist

When your collar is back on, please use this checklist to make sure it is in the right place:

- Your chin is centred comfortably in the chin piece.
- The Velcro tabs are straight, with both tabs the same length.
- The front of the collar is angled up toward your ears.
- None of the plastic edging is against the skin. There should always be padding visible between the collar and your skin.

For further guidance, please also refer to the manufacturer's leaflet which should be provided with your collar.

Useful links

Collar manufacturer: www.ossur.com

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