

## Patient information factsheet

# Orthopaedic orthotic boot advice

You have been given this factsheet as you need an orthotic boot to treat your lower limb injury. You may have had an injury or operation to your toe, foot, ankle or leg.

### Applying your boot

It is important you feel confident taking your boot on and off. You will be shown how to do this by the person fitting your boot. We will also give you a manufacturer's leaflet which has a picture guide of how to do this.

### Caring for your leg

You should wear your boot the majority of the time, unless told otherwise by your doctor.

When you remove your boot, you will need to check for any scrapes (abrasions) or red areas to the skin on your leg or foot. Check your heel is not red or painful as this is an area where pressure can build and create a sore. It is very important to check your skin if you have diabetes or any condition which changes the feeling in your legs.

**If you do have any problems with your skin, contact the department who fitted your boot for advice.** You can find contact numbers at the end of this factsheet.

You must take your boot off each day to wash and cream your leg. You should avoid touching any wounds while doing this.

**If you have an Achilles injury, you must keep your toes pointing downwards at all times during your wash.**

Always replace your sock before reapplying your boot.

### Clothing

You should wear loose-fitting clothing that can sit over your boot. This will allow you to get changed easily without having to remove your boot. Do not tuck clothing in to your boot. If you wore tight-fitting clothing when your boot was fitted, you can change into loose clothing as soon as you get home.

### Elevating your leg

It is natural for your limbs to swell when you have an injury or operation. You should elevate your leg on pillows so that it is not lying flat in front of you. Make sure your heel is not resting on anything and is free from pressure.

If you are allowed to take your boot off, you can gently flex your ankle up and down and wiggle your toes to help with the swelling and prevent stiffness in the future. **However, you must not do this if you have an Achilles tendon repair or injury.**

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## Walking in your boot

You will be advised by your doctor whether you can safely put weight through your leg in the boot. You will either be fully weight-bearing, partially weight-bearing or non-weight bearing.

## Preventing blood clots

You will be assessed for the risk of developing a blood clot while you are in the boot. You may be given a tablet or injection to thin your blood.

## Possible problems

If you experience any of the following problems, you must contact the department who is treating you:

- discharge, wetness, or odour under the boot
- blister-like pain or rubbing under the boot
- a change in the sensation in your leg or uncontrolled pain.

You should also contact us if you start to run out of blood thinning medication (if required).

**If you experience calf pain, swelling, or sudden shortness of breath, seek medical attention urgently.**

## Further information

This is a video from Brighton Hospital showing how to apply an Aircast boot:

[www.fracturecare.co.uk/general-advice/fitting-your-boot/](http://www.fracturecare.co.uk/general-advice/fitting-your-boot/)

## Contact numbers

Royal South Hants nurses' station: **023 8054 0215**

Physiotherapy department: **023 8120 6459**

Virtual fracture clinic enquiries: **07766 367625**

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**