

Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO) Wear & Care Guide

Your **Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO)** has been custom-designed to help you achieve your personal rehabilitation goals. These instructions will help you correctly use and care for your AFO. If you have any specific questions about your care plan, please contact your clinician.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Your orthotist will make sure your AFO fits properly and that you feel comfortable putting on and removing the brace. Regular follow-up appointments are important to assess the fit and function of your AFO and your ongoing orthotic and rehabilitation goals.

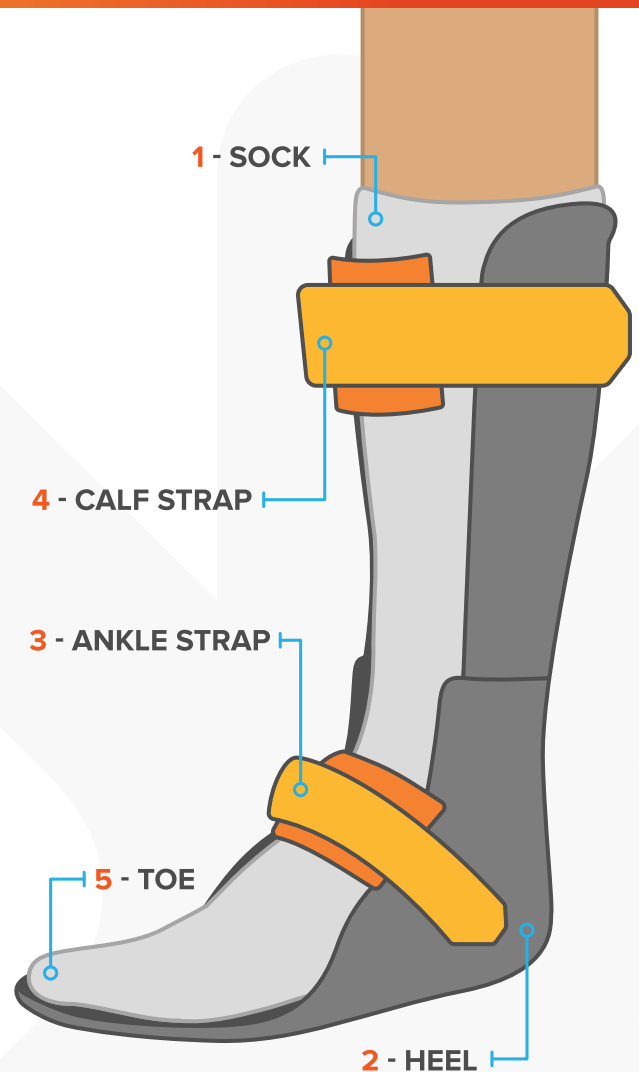
PROPER FOOTWEAR

Your AFO was designed with your shoe in mind. Even the height of your shoe's heel makes a difference. Ask your clinician about shoe recommendations.

PUTTING ON YOUR AFO

Your orthotist will determine how to put on your specific AFO, but below are some general guidelines:

1. Always wear a clean sock that reaches as high as the top of the brace. Smooth out any wrinkles.
2. Be sure your heel has good contact with the bottom of the AFO.
3. If your AFO has an ankle strap, tighten it first to hold your heel down in the AFO.
4. Next, tighten the calf strap. Note that most AFOs use a hook and loop closure (like Velcro) to secure the strap. If your AFO has a different closure, your orthotist will show you how to tighten and close your particular device.
5. Now that you have secured the AFO to your leg, slide the AFO into your shoe using a shoe horn if necessary.



HELPFUL TIP #1: Removing the shoe insole allows more room for the AFO.

HELPFUL TIP #2: Be sure to tighten the shoe laces or fasteners on your shoes snugly.

WEARING SCHEDULE

Your clinician will provide a personalized break-in schedule that will help you gradually increase the number of hours per day the AFO is worn. In general, we suggest you start wearing your AFO for two hours per day, gradually increasing use over the course of a week as long as you are not experiencing pain or noticing any signs of redness or irritation. A typical wearing schedule may look something like this:

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
2 hours	4 hours	6 hours	8 hours	10 hours	All Day	All Day

SKIN CARE

Check your skin daily. Redness that lasts longer than 20 minutes after you take off the AFO can be a warning sign that there are excessive pressures that might develop into problems later on. Additionally, your AFO should not cause pain. If redness does not go away within 20 minutes after removing the AFO or if skin or bone soreness develops, contact your clinician.

CLEANING INSTRUCTIONS

- Most AFOs are made with low-maintenance materials that are easily cleaned.
- In general, when needed, we recommend cleaning with warm water and mild soap, rinse, and dry. Please review your specific AFO care with your clinician.
- The AFO will not absorb water, but the straps, strap pads, and any padding inside the AFO will need time to dry.
- Inspect regularly. If there are any noticeable signs of wear, such as cracks, stress marks, sharp edges, loose attachment screws, rivets, or strap fraying, contact your clinician.
- AFOs DO NOT like extreme temperatures. They can become brittle in extreme cold and can warp in extreme heat.

APPOINTMENT SCHEDULE

Follow-up appointments are important to ensure the proper fit and function of your AFO. Your clinician will schedule your first follow-up appointment two weeks after you receive your brace. You will then need to schedule follow-ups every six months for the first year. Here is an example of what your journey may look like:

TWO WEEK FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT	FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS (EVERY 6 MONTHS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check that everything is going well and answer any questions• Evaluate the fit of the AFO and make any adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make any adjustments• Review your orthotic and rehabilitation goals

As you go through this journey, remember you are not alone. Your clinician is available to answer your questions and support you in any way they can.

 Visit [HangerClinic.com/AFO](https://www.hangerclinic.com/AFO) to learn more.



WATCH THE
INSTRUCTIONAL
VIDEO

