

Care and Handling

Your prosthesis is a sophisticated device designed to enhance your independence, activity level and mobility. It is customized specifically to you and your individual needs and is an important part of your new body. Care and maintenance of your prosthesis will ensure the best comfort and fit. You and your prosthetist are partners in creating and maintaining a device that enhances your life. With all of this in mind please follow these guidelines:

Your Residual Limb:

- Wash daily with soap and water. Rinse and dry carefully. Whenever you bathe or shower be sure your limb is thoroughly dry before putting on your prosthesis. Bathing before bedtime is best so limb is dry in the a.m.
- Do not shave your limb or apply creams/moisturizers prior to donning your liner.
- Check daily for any signs of redness, blistering, swelling, soreness or breakdown of the skin. If redness/irritation persists for more than an hour after the removal of your prosthesis, stop use immediately and contact your prosthetist. As the connecting point for your prosthesis, your residual limb is very important. Be attentive to skin changes and pressure points and tell your prosthetist about any discomforts.

Shrinker Socks:

- Your shrinker socks are a compression garment designed to keep your residual limb from swelling. These are meant to be used when you are not wearing your prosthesis. Wrinkles and rolling down of sock should be avoided.

Limb Socks:

- Socks are measured by thickness or "ply." (1, 3 or 5 ply)
- As the volume of your residual limb decreases, **additional plies of sock can be added to retain the snug fit of your prosthesis.** * Remember: Your prosthesis does not change but your leg does!!*
- Add or subtract socks according to your comfort and fit. Track changes in sock ply and report this to your prosthetist at your next appointment. Don't be afraid to add layers if you are feeling any pressure points!
- Change your socks as needed and wash with mild soap and water. It is better to air-dry to retain elasticity.
- The sock must fit snugly without wrinkles to avoid pressure points but do not over as this will change the ply.

Silicone/Gel Liners:

- Apply by "rolling" onto your residual limb from the distal end. **Do not pull on like a sock!** Remove by "unrolling", leaving the gel side facing out for cleaning. **Do not leave gel facing out after cleaning as it may collect lint.**
- Wash daily with mild soap and water. For best results use an anti-bacterial soap that is free of dyes and perfumes. Rinse thoroughly, pat dry with lint free cloth and leave to dry completely overnight.
- Monthly Disinfection: Using a spray bottle, mix 50/50 tap water and isopropyl alcohol. Lightly coat the interior gel of the liner and wipe gently. Rinse off excess alcohol and ensure that the liner is dry before reapplying. **Alcohol that may remain on liner surface can irritate the skin if not rinsed thoroughly!**
- Inspect your liners on a daily basis taking note of any wear of the fabric or gel which may indicate changes in the prosthetic fit.
- Rotate your liners daily. Wear one while you are cleaning and drying the other.

Socket:

- Keep it Clean. For optimal function of your prosthesis, regular cleaning of the interior of the socket is required. Clean with a sponge or soft cloth and mild soap, towel dry and leave to dry thoroughly overnight. Clean exterior similarly when needed.
- Weekly Disinfection: Wipe out interior of the socket weekly with isopropyl alcohol to halt any bacterial growth.

Foot:

- Your foot is an important factor in the alignment of your prosthesis and is designed to work with a specific heel height. **Do not wear your prosthesis without shoes or change to a shoe with a different heel height.** Talk to your prosthetist if you would like to change heel height.

Knee:

- Maintenance requirements vary for differing knee styles. See your prosthetist if you hear or feel any excessive noise or grating. **Do not adjust screws, hinges or other parts of your prosthesis yourself!**
- ** Your prosthetist plays a key role in your life from this point forward. Rely on them as your best source for answers, guidance and information.**