


## Protecting Your Skin

It is very important to prevent skin breakdown (i.e., sore, dark red skin). The skin under the brace will eventually toughen up, especially where the brace presses the hardest, over 2 to 3 weeks. Do not use creams or lotions under the brace initially because these products tend to soften the skin and can lead to skin breakdown. A light dusting of cornstarch may help reduce moisture due to perspiration in hot weather.

Pay special attention to pink areas on the skin where your brace presses the most. The pink color is normal and should disappear within 30 minutes of removing the brace. If the skin remains pink longer than 30 minutes, the brace may need to be adjusted. If there is skin breakdown (sore, red, raw skin) discontinue wearing the brace while continuing to bathe the area daily until the skin heals. This usually takes several days. Please call Braceworks 403-240-9100 for an appointment to re-assess the fit of your brace. 

### Questions?

P 403-240-9100  
F 403-217-4687

info@braceworks.ca  
www.braceworks.ca

3500 24 Ave NW, Suite 1  
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## Your Clinicians

We thrive on the clinical challenges of helping children to be as active and independent as possible. Braceworks provides continuity of care from childhood to youth and throughout their transition into adulthood.

### Marc Schneider

Bachelor of Physical Education  
University of Alberta (1985)

## Authorized Orthotic Vendor for:

Alberta Aids to Daily Living, Alberta Health  
Alberta Workers Compensation Board  
Non-insured Health Benefits, Health Canada

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## Wear and Care Guide



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## Your Child's New AFOs

Your child should wear their Ankle-Foot Orthotics (AFOs) during the day with their shoes. Walking barefoot after a bath or in the evening will do no harm.

Your child may feel uncomfortable wearing the brace during the initial adjustment period which may last up to a few weeks. During this period, encourage your child to wear their brace as much as possible to become acquainted with it. The brace should feel more natural and comfortable.

However, if your child complains about the AFO or you see red marks, please make an appointment at Braceworks to check fit and make adjustments, as required. 

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q: How do I apply and tighten my child's brace?

1. Hold the foot at or beyond 90 degrees.
2. Place the foot firmly into the heel pocket of the AFO.
3. Secure the ankle strap.
4. Secure the shin strap.
5. Fit the footwear over the AFO.
6. Prevent skin problems with your new brace by following the *Schedule for Wearing Your Brace* in this guide.
7. Always check your child's foot and lower leg for any areas of redness when you remove the brace.
8. If dark red areas do not diminish within 30 minutes of removing the brace, please call Braceworks 403-240-9100.

**Q: How do I clean my brace?** Clean your brace frequently with soap and water. Allow it to air dry. Sanitize regularly with rubbing alcohol. Do not use a hair dryer as the heat will melt the hook and loop of the Velcro™ straps.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: When should I call Braceworks to have my brace adjusted?** You're welcome to call Braceworks with questions or concerns, at any time.

Certainly, if you notice dark red marks on your child's skin that last longer than 30 minutes after removing the brace – please mark the spot on the brace with a felt pen (like a Sharpie™) and call Braceworks.

**Q: Do I need to make an appointment for minor repairs to replace Velcro™ straps, rivets and hinges?** Please call ahead so we can make arrangements for our Technician to service the brace promptly within a couple of days. Your child's attendance is not required.

**Q: We travel to Calgary and attend Clinics at the Alberta Children's Hospital. If they recommend adjustments to the brace, is it possible for me to visit Braceworks on the same day?** Yes. Please call ahead from the Clinic, as soon as possible, so we can accommodate you the same day.

**Q: How tight should the brace be?** The heel should be securely held in the brace with no "give" or movement. Wear your brace as tightly as possible. It should not be painful. A loose brace will cause rubbing and lead to skin problems.

**Q: What are the best socks to wear with AFOs?** Choose knee socks that fit smoothly conforming to the foot and providing protection from pressure, bunching, binding and tightness. Avoid products with inside seams or irritating ridges that can lead to skin breakdown. Soft combed cotton with stretch are comfortable. You'll find products for pre-school aged children at Gap for Kids. Wal-mart, Target and wearit.ca offer a good selection of socks for older children.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: My child's foot pulls up on the Velcro™ strap. Is this normal?** Yes. Spasticity causes the muscles to contract pulling up against the strap. The strap is intended to hold the foot down in the AFO. If skin discoloration under the strap lasts longer than 60 minutes, call Braceworks 403-240-9100.

**Q: How can I tell when my child is out-growing the AFO?** Signs that your child is outgrowing their AFO include complaints of pain or you notice red marks beginning to appear where they haven't previously been seen. Other signs include toes extending beyond the end of the foot section of the AFO. Call Braceworks for an appointment so that we can determine if the brace can be adjusted to extend the life of the brace or a new one is required.

## A Schedule for Wearing Your Brace

Gradually increase the amount of time you wear your brace each day, over the course of three days until you wear it full-time during the day. Follow the program below to help your skin and muscles adjust to having the brace on.

**Day 1** - Wear your brace for up to two hours ON, followed by one hour OFF for a total wearing time of 6 hours.

**Day 2** - Wear your brace for up 4 hours. Remove the brace and check your skin. If your skin is just pink, re-apply the brace for 4 more hours for a total wearing time of 8 hours.

**Day 3** - Wear your brace for up to 4 hours, removing it to check your skin. Put the brace back on and repeat twice for a total wearing time of 12 hours. 