

PATIENT EDUCATION – WEAR AND CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BRACE 1

WEARING YOUR BRACE regularly with diligence is key to the success of this method of treatment. According to **THE CALGARY PROTOCOL**, you are required to wear the brace for 23 hours per day during the correction phase until the deformity is corrected. Following correction of the deformity, wearing time is reduced to 8 hours per day or night during the maintenance phase until you reach your full height. The correction phase involving continuous bracing typically lasts up to 6 months followed by the maintenance phase of bracing for an additional 12 to 18 months for a total treatment time of 24 months.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR SKIN ON A DAILY BASIS
Wear your brace over a snug fitting cotton undershirt at all times. Girls should continue to wear bras under the undershirt. It is important that the undershirt fit well, without wrinkles as these can lead to skin irritation. Apply the brace properly to your body, as will be shown to you by your doctor.

BE PATIENT! Putting your brace on by yourself may take some practice.

PROTECTING YOUR SKIN

It is very important to prevent skin breakdown (sore, red skin). Bathe or shower daily to protect the skin. Pay special attention to pink areas of the skin where your brace presses the most. The pink color should disappear within 30 minutes of removing the brace. If the skin remains pink longer than 30 minutes, adjustments may be required.

HOW DO I APPLY AND TIGHTEN THE BRACE MYSELF? Place the brace on your body as described in *FITTING THE PECTUS BRACE*. Slide the ladder through the buckle and ratchet it up until you feel a comfortable amount of pressure on the protrusion.

Once the brace is secure, inhale deeply to ensure the brace is not so tight that it restricts your breathing. Adjust the ratchet, if required.

HOW TIGHT SHOULD THE BRACE BE? The brace should fit securely and you should be able to breathe comfortably. Wear it as tightly as possible. Note that too much pressure will cause skin breakdown and sore ribs. The shoulder straps should be taught. Make sure that the pad is correctly

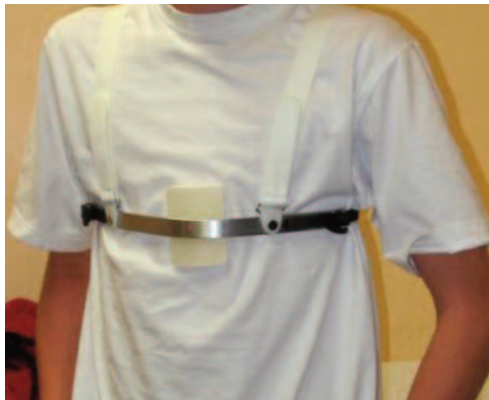
positioned directly over the apex of the protrusion. The bar should not be in contact with the skin during normal breathing.

WHEN DO I NEED YOUR BRACE REPLACED OR ADJUSTED? When the brace is correctly positioned during normal breathing, the pad and the protrusion should be the only point of contact between the brace and the body. However, factors such as growth and/or decrease in the protrusion may bring the bar in contact with the skin. At this point, the brace is no longer effective in applying force to the protrusion and must be adjusted. Contact your Physician to determine if adjustments are required. ☺

FOLLOW UP CARE

According to **THE CALGARY PROTOCOL**, your prescribing physician will monitor your progress at regular 3 and then 6 month intervals during the first year of the bracing process. Thereafter, you will be monitored on an annual basis up to and including one year following completion of the maintenance phase when you've discontinued bracing.

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HOW DO I PUT MY BRACE ON? Your Physician will demonstrate proper placement.

1. Slip the shoulder straps over your head with the side buckles undone.
2. Insert the ladder into the buckle on one side and ratchet.
3. Position the pad directly over the apex of the protrusion.
4. Insert the ladder into the buckle on the other side and ratchet.
5. Adjust the tension on the brace by ratcheting the buckles until it is tight at your deepest breath.
6. Ensure the only point of contact between the bar and your chest wall, during a normal breath, is the pad—positioned directly over the apex of the protrusion. **NOTE** The bar will contact the skin at maximal inhalation.
7. Adjust the length of the shoulder straps for comfort.

If your protrusion is asymmetrical, (i.e., lateral to the centre-line of the sternum), you may notice the bar may tip towards the ribs on the opposite side.

Use the foam wedges in the pad kit provided with your brace to adjust the angle of the pad so that it is centred on the protrusion. ☺

CARING FOR YOUR BRACE

You can use soap and water to simply wipe the brace, as required.

TIPS FROM OUR PATIENTS

An *egg carton* style foam pad on top of a regular mattress improves comfort when sleeping on your side.

Avoid sleeping on your front during the corrective phase of treatment when you are wearing the brace 23 hours per day.

Loose fitting clothes help conceal any outward signs of the brace.

Don't undo the shoulder straps when you put the brace on or take it off. The straps help you take the brace off and put it on by connecting the front and back sections of the brace when the buckles are undone.