

Cervical Thoracic Lumbar Orthosis (CTLO)

The Cervical Thoracic Lumbar Orthosis (CTLO) is a rigid orthosis (brace) that supports the upper (cervical), mid (thoracic) and lower (lumbar) spine. It prevents forward (flexion), backward (extension) and twisting (rotation) movement. You have been prescribed this orthosis by your spinal doctor to manage your neck and/or back injury.



CTLO: front and back view

Who will fit my CTLO?

- Your CTLO will be fitted by an orthotist (specialist) from Royal Perth Hospital (RPH).
- The CTLO may need further adjustments once you start to move around.
- **Only allow qualified people to adjust your CTLO. Please contact your orthotist for any adjustments.**

How long will I need the CTLO?

Most people wear the CTLO for 8 to 12 weeks, but the exact time depends on your doctor's instructions. After you are discharged from hospital, you will have outpatient follow-up appointments. Your spinal doctor will inform you when you may stop wearing the CTLO at these appointments.

When should I wear the CTLO?

Anytime you are upright, for example when you are having a shower, in the car or sitting watching television.

Should I wear the brace at night?

- If you have been cleared to remove the CTLO overnight, you can – as long as you are lying on a flat bed and wearing the replacement Short Aspen Collar you have been given.
- You can use a pillow and lie on your side if it's comfortable, as long as the bed is flat and you're wearing the replacement collar.

How do I remove the CTLO?

- You will need someone to help.
- The brace must only be changed when you are lying flat (no pillow).

Follow these steps to safely remove your CTLO.

Equipment: You will need 3 towels.

Step 1

- If you are returning from a shower, fold the first towel and place it on the bed to protect the sheets. Lie down with your neck supported on the towel.
- Have a second towel ready to dry yourself.
- Place a third, folded towel next to your head (see photo). This will support your neck when you roll.

Step 2

Unclip the clasps on each side of your CTLO.

Step 3

Remove the front piece.

Step 4

- Bend up your knees and log roll onto your side so your head is resting on the folded towel.
- Remove the back piece – your helper will need to do this.
- Roll back onto your back.

1



2



3



4



Note: Before going to bed, put on the replacement collar by sliding the back part under your neck, then putting the front piece on and fastening the Velcro on both sides. Please see the separate Short Aspen Collar handout for more information.

How do I put the CTLO back on?

- If you are wearing the replacement collar, remove this first.
- Place the folded towel next to your head.
- Roll onto your side and place the back piece in place.
- Roll back onto your back and put the front piece in place. Make sure the side edges of the front piece sit over the side edges of the back piece.
- Fasten the side straps by using the Velcro and clips.
- Attach the Velcro straps on either side of your chin.
- You can now get up and move safely.

How do I care for my CTLO

- If the black pads need cleaning, rinse them with detergent in a sink. After cleaning, squeeze out excess water with a towel and lay them somewhere to dry out of direct sunlight.
- If required, the white plastic can be cleaned with soap and water then dried with a towel.

What activities should I avoid while wearing my CTLO?

Avoid these activities:

- driving a motor vehicle
- physical sports and running, especially jarring or high impact activities
- at risk activities including riding a bicycle or skateboarding
- heavy lifting, pushing or manual work
- check with your spinal doctor before resuming any of these activities
- be careful around small pets and children. Keep your environment free of obstacles such as mats, cords and rugs that you may trip over.

What else do I need to know?

- Always wear clothing under your CTLO (unless you are showering) to protect your skin.
- Clothing worn under the CTLO should be closely fitted. For example, a singlet or form fitting T-shirt.
- Wear loose, easy fitting clothes over your brace if you need.
- Wear comfortable practical shoes. Avoid thongs, high heels or shoes that have a slippery sole (bottom).
- **Check your skin daily for any areas of redness or irritation. If your skin becomes red or blistered, contact the South Metropolitan Orthotics Department on 6152 7450 for an urgent review.**

Who do I contact if I have questions after I leave hospital?

Before you leave hospital, ask your nurse, spinal doctor, physiotherapist or orthotist any questions you have.

After you are discharged from RPH, please contact **South Metropolitan Orthotics Department on 6152 7450.**



About us

This information sheet has been prepared by the Royal Perth Bentley Group Physiotherapy Department.

Royal Perth Bentley Group Physiotherapy Department,
Royal Perth Hospital,
Tel: 9224 2076,
Level 3, C Block, RPH, Victoria Square, Perth.



Please let our staff know if you have trouble reading this information.



CONSUMER
REVIEWED