

Long Aspen Cervical Thoracic Orthosis

The Long Aspen Cervical Thoracic Orthosis (CTO) is a rigid orthosis (brace) that supports the neck (cervical) and mid to upper (thoracic) spine. It prevents forward movement (flexion), backwards movement (extension) and sideways movement (rotation). Your spinal doctor has prescribed this orthosis to manage your neck and/or mid to upper back injury.



Front



Back

Who will fit my orthosis?

- Your Long Aspen CTO will be fitted by an orthotist (specialist) from Royal Perth Hospital (RPH).
- The orthosis may need further adjustments once you start moving around.
- Only allow qualified people to adjust your orthosis. Please contact the orthotist for any further adjustments.
- Orthotics will provide you with a second set of green pads so you can replace wet pads with dry pads after showering or if soiled.

How long will I need the orthosis?

Most people wear the orthosis 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 orthosis at these appointments.

When should I wear the orthosis?

The Long Aspen CTO is to be worn at **all times**, including in the shower. Only remove it to replace the pads after having a shower or if they are soiled. There are instructions for this below under 'How do I remove the orthosis?'.

How do I remove the orthosis?

Follow these steps to safely remove the orthosis and change wet pads for dry pads after a shower.

Step one

- You will need someone to help you.
- The orthosis must only be changed when you are lying flat on your back (no pillow).
- Place a towel on the bed and lie flat on your back. Have a second towel ready to use nearby to dry your skin and the orthosis.
- Unclip the 2 round clips at the front of the orthosis (at your waist).

Step 2

- Roll onto your side and then remove the back piece.

Step 3

- Roll back onto your back.
- Open the Velcro straps on either side of the orthosis.

Step 4

- Remove the front piece.

Step 5

- Place your hand under the neck and slide the back part of the orthosis out to the side.
- When the orthosis is removed, stay as still as possible and do not move your neck.
- Remove the wet pads one at a time, dry the plastic and then place the spare dry pads on the orthosis.



View our instructional video by scanning the QR code.



How do I put the orthosis back on?

- Slide the upper back piece under the neck. Make sure it's the right way up – do this by checking the writing on the back of the orthosis.
- To replace the front piece, take the sides of the orthosis in your hands and 'flare and scoop' the piece up under your chin.
 - To flare, move the sides of the front panel outwards creating a larger opening to fit around your neck.
 - To scoop, position the orthosis under the chin, ensuring it is centred and in the right position.
- Place the front piece inside the upper back piece and attach the Velcro straps.
- Roll onto your side and put the lower back piece in place.
- Roll back onto your back.
- If needed, you can roll onto your other side to pull the back straps through.
- Clip in the 2 round clips at the front of the orthosis.
- You can now move in the orthosis and get up and walk.

How do I care for the orthosis?

- Don't put the pads in the washing machine. Handwash the pads with detergent and warm water in a sink. Squeeze out any excess water with a towel and place them on a flat surface out of direct sunlight to dry. They will then be ready to use after your next shower.
- The white plastic on your orthosis can be cleaned with soap and water then dried with a towel.

What activities should I avoid while wearing my orthosis?

- 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 of trip hazards.
 - Take extra care around small pets and children.
 - Keep your environment free of obstacles such as mats, cords and rugs.

What else do I need to know?

- Do not wear any clothing under the orthosis.
- Wear loose, easy fitting clothes over your orthosis.
- Choose comfortable, practical shoes. Don't wear thongs, high heels or shoes that have a slippery sole (bottom).
- **Check your skin daily for 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 Royal Perth Hospital (RPH), please contact **South Metropolitan Orthotics Department on 6152 7450 with all orthosis inquiries.**



About us

This information sheet has been prepared by the RPH Physiotherapy Department. If you are a patient, please talk to a healthcare professional to understand and use this information correctly for your situation.

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