

Short Aspen Cervical Orthosis

without assistance

The Short Aspen Cervical Orthosis (CO) is a rigid orthosis (brace) that supports the neck (cervical spine). It prevents forward movement (flexion), backwards movement (extension) and sideways movement (rotation). Your spinal doctor has prescribed this orthosis to help manage your neck injury.



Front



Back

Who will fit my orthosis?

- Your Short Aspen CO will be fitted by an orthotist (specialist) from Royal Perth Hospital (RPH).
- The orthosis may need further adjustments once you start to move around.
- **Only allow qualified people to adjust your orthosis. Please contact your orthotist for any 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 Short Aspen CO 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 over the page 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. Depending on your situation and instructions from your physiotherapist, you can do these steps yourself or have a helper.

Pictures one and 2

- 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.
- Open the Velcro straps on either side of the orthosis and remove the front piece.

Picture 3

- 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.
- While keeping your neck still, remove the wet pads one at a time. Dry the plastic with the spare towel 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 back piece under your 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 back piece and attach the Velcro straps.
- 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. Avoid thongs, high heels or shoes with 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 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.