

Preparatory Prostheses Instructions, Care and Maintenance

1. Your preparatory prosthesis was made especially for you from a cast impression of your residual limb.
2. This prosthesis is designed to be worn while your residual limb continues to heal and mature in size and shape. During this time it is expected that adjustments will be required to maintain the fit and accommodate these changes.
3. There are three distinct mechanisms in the maturing process:
 - a) *Post Surgical Edema (swelling)*: This is a result of the surgical process. It is normal and generally resolves in several weeks with the aid of compressive dressings like ace bandages and stump shrinker socks.
 - b) *Muscle Atrophy (thinning musculature)*: The muscles located in the residual limb generally operate the next joint down. Muscles in the thigh operate the knee and muscles in the leg operate the ankle. Because these muscles no longer function as they normally do, they become smaller from lack of use. This is normal and advantageous in that as the muscles shrink, the skeletal parts of the stump have better control of the prosthetic socket. The majority of these changes generally occur within the first few months after amputation.
 - c) *Long Term Effects of Socket Pressure*: These changes occur over a long period of time and are the body's natural response to long-term pressure. This effect is similar in nature to those from waist belts or bra straps. They may occur indefinitely. Remember your body never stops changing.

General Care

1. The prosthetic socket environment is warm, dark, and humid,. This is ideal for bacterial growth.
2. It is imperative that the skin and textiles (socks) be clean and washed daily. Care instructions are included with packaging.
3. The socket liner (insert) should also be washed regularly. Soap and water with a sponge or a soft cloth works well, water will not harm the liner. Soap, alcohol and detergents like Palmolive or Fantastic are fine for problem cleaning. Be sure to use plenty of water to rise out the residue. Dry with a towel.
4. The plastic socket should also be cleaned periodically.
5. Be aware of any changes such as noises or looseness developing. If this occurs, contact the office as soon as possible.
6. Never hesitate to contact the office with any questions or concerns.

Adjusting the Fit of Your Prosthesis

1. Stump socks are the best tool to adjust the fit.
2. As you wear the prosthesis the stump usually gets smaller.
3. As the stump gets smaller, it sinks deeper into the socket.
4. As it sinks deeper, more pressure is felt on the end of the stump or in the calf.
5. Other areas can be problematic as the stump rests lower than the intended socket contours.
6. As fitting problems arise, the first thing to try is adding a stump sock. This will tighten the fit and raise the stump in the socket back to its intended position.
7. Stump socks may have to be added during the day to accommodate changes in stump volume.
8. Be careful not to over sock. Too much sock will keep the stump too high and also cause fitting problems. Be sure the socket goes on all the way.
9. If stump socks are not effective in adjusting the fit, call the office for an appointment.
10. Changes are expected from time to time, a professional may need to adjust the fit.