

## **KAFO (Knee-Ankle-Foot Orthosis) Fracture Brace**

### **General Description:**

This orthosis is a full leg length device that supports the limb following a fracture of the lower femur (thigh bone) or upper tibia (shin bone). The purpose of the KAFO fracture brace is to stabilize the broken bone allowing it to heal in the proper position. A KAFO fracture brace encompasses more of the leg than a conventional KAFO and is more supportive of the bone. The brace is made of a flexible plastic and extends from the bottom of the foot to the top of the thigh. The KAFO has hinges at the knee and ankle that can be either locked stiff or left free to allow full motion at these joints.

### **Application:**

When applying a KAFO, it is very important to begin by getting your heel properly placed or seated in the device. A cotton stockinette should be worn on the leg underneath the brace. The device is most easily applied while sitting on a bed with your feet on the bed.

- Begin by releasing the knee joints of the brace to allow the device to bend. (See Figure 1).
- Next, gently lift the injured limb into the front thigh and calf openings of the KAFO.
- With your knee slightly bent, align the center hinges of the knee with the middle of your kneecap (patella) making certain your heel is in firm contact with the heel portion of the device (See Figure 2).
- Apply a comfortable walking shoe or tennis shoe over the foot and brace to maintain the proper position.
- Finally, tighten all Velcro closures starting at the bottom and working your way up (See Figure 3).

### **Cleaning and Maintenance:**

The best way to clean a KAFO is to spray the inside with rubbing alcohol and wipe dry to remove body oils and residue. Wiping it out with a damp towel and anti-bacterial soap or anti-bacterial, moist towelettes can also clean the KAFO. Wash the cotton stockinette in cold water and air dry or machine dry on low. Do not immerse the KAFO in water, as this will harm the instep strap and metal fasteners. Keep the brace away from excessive heat to prevent damage to the plastic.

### **Tips and Problem Solving:**

- Changing the heel height of the shoe can affect the function and stability of the KAFO.
- If there are any problems or questions regarding the KAFO, please contact the orthotist.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**