

SMO (Supra-Malleolar Orthosis)

General Description:

SMO is the acronym for Supra-Malleolar Orthosis. The SMO, as with other orthoses, gets its name for the part of the body for which it encompasses. This orthosis supports the leg just above the anklebones or malleoli. The SMO is considered the shortest of the Ankle Foot Orthoses or AFO's.

The SMO is prescribed for patients who have soft, flexible, flat feet. SMO's are often worn by children. The medical term for a flat foot is a pronated foot or pes planus, pes plano-valgus, and hyper-pronated foot.

The SMO is designed to maintain a vertical, or neutral heel while also supporting the three arches of the foot. This can help improve standing balance and walking.



Application:

1. Spread the plastic which wraps around the top of the foot (dorsum flaps). See Figure 2.
2. Approach the foot from behind and "scoop" the foot inside the SMO. In order to ensure that the heel is all the way inside the SMO, bend the knee and push the foot backwards and down by gently exerting pressure over the instep of the foot. It is very important to make sure that the heel is properly seated inside the SMO. See figure 3.
3. Fasten the instep strap over the instep to hold the heel inside the SMO. See Figure 4.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

4. The foot with the SMO is then slid into a shoe. The shoelaces may need to be opened wide in order to get the SMO easily into the shoe. See Figure 5.
5. If necessary, remove the insole of the shoe to accommodate the SMO. See Figure 6.



Figure 5



Figure 6

Wearing Schedule:

On the first day you receive the brace, begin by wearing for only 1 hour. After 1 hour, remove the brace and check your skin for red marks. Some small, light red marks may be noticed on the skin that should go away in 20 to 30 minutes after removing the brace. Slight redness is common over the instep and under the ball of the foot. If the red marks do not go away in 20 to 30 minutes or if you notice any scratching, bruising, or blistering, **do not put the brace back on**. Call immediately to schedule an appointment with your orthotist.

If the skin is ok, wait at least 1 hour and then put the brace back on for 1 hour at a time for the rest of the first day, checking the skin after each hour.

On the second day, put the brace on for 2 hours. After 2 hours, remove the brace and check the skin. If the skin is ok, put the brace back on for 2 hours at a time for the rest of the day, checking the skin after every 2 hours. If your skin is ok, gradually increase wearing time by 1 hour each day, checking the skin after each wearing time.

Cleaning and Maintenance:

The best way to clean a SMO is to spray the inside with rubbing alcohol and wipe dry to remove body oils and residue. It can also be cleaned by wiping it out with a damp towel and anti-bacterial soap or anti-bacterial moist towelettes.

Do not immerse the SMO in water, as this will harm the instep strap and metal fasteners. Keep the SMO away from excessive heat to prevent damage to the plastic.

Tips and Problem Solving:

SMO's should always be worn with socks and shoes. The best types of shoes to accommodate SMO's are basic gym shoes with laces or Velcro. Sandals and dress shoes are not recommended since these shoes do not have much room inside to accommodate the orthosis.

If you notice red marks, bruises, or blisters on your skin, discontinue wearing the brace and call your orthotist to schedule an appointment.

If there are any problems or questions regarding the orthosis, please contact the orthotist.