

CONNECTICUT NECK & BACK SPECIALISTS LLC

GUIDE TO WEARING YOUR BRACE

A schedule for wearing your brace:

Brace wearing is a gradual buildup of time per day in your brace. It will take 2 to 3 weeks until you wear your brace full-time. The following program is designed to help your skin and muscles adjust to having the brace on.

Stage 1 (5 days)

- Wear your brace 6 hours per day. This is best accomplished after school and up until bedtime.
- Apply the brace for 2 hours. Then remove the brace, check your skin, and rub with alcohol. If your skin is just pink, re-apply for 2 more hours. Repeat up to 6 hours total
- If your skin is sore and red, wait 30 minutes, then rub with alcohol and wear for 2 more hours up to 6 hours total.

Stage 2 (5 days)

- Increase wear to 10 hours per day. This is best done over a weekend (only one weekend is necessary).
 - Put the brace on for 4 hours. Remove the brace, check your skin, and rub with alcohol. If your skin is just pink, re-apply the brace for 3 hours. Repeat up to 10 hour total
- An alternative to stage 2 is to put the brace on and leave it on until it bothers you. Remove and check your skin. Try to increase the time you wear the brace each day.

Stage 3 (5 days)

- Wear the brace 18 hours daily.
- Put your brace on before school. At lunchtime, or about 4 hours later, take the brace off and check your skin and rub with alcohol. Your school nurse can usually help with this. Put the brace back on until after school.
- After school, remove the brace for 6 hours, then reapply at bedtime and sleep in your brace. If you wake up the first night, take off the brace and go back to sleep. You need to be rested for school. If you wake up on the second night, try to roll over and go back to sleep with the brace still on.

Stage 4 ("full time" brace wear)

- Wear your brace 23 hours per day. You may be out of the brace one hour each day for dressing and bathing. If needed, you may have additional time out of the brace (1 to 2 hours each day) for team sports.

When you are able to wear your brace 23 hours each day, congratulate and reward yourself. You have achieved your goal!

Here are some helpful tips for wearing a brace:

- The first week of wearing a new brace is usually the most difficult.
- Wear a cotton tee-shirt underneath the brace. The braces can be very hot and do not “breathe”.
- During the warmer months, change the tee-shirt several times a day.
- With some braces, it is uncomfortable to wear jeans or shorts that have buttons and clasps.
- The orthotics company will mark on the Velcro straps where to snug up the brace. This is very important so you can be sure it is being worn properly.
- Inspect the skin under the brace daily for rashes or rubbed areas.
- As you grow you will out-grow the brace. On the average, you will need a new brace about once a year.
- See your doctor as often as he or she asks you to. This way, the doctor can check how well the brace is working for you.