

CERVICAL ORTHOSIS (PHILADELPHIA, ASPEN, MIAMI J COLLAR) GUIDE

You have received a Philadelphia, Aspen, or Miami J collar from Orthotic & Prosthetic Specialties, Inc. Your orthosis is a specialized device, and its use may require specialized instructions. These may come from your Orthotist, Therapist, or Nurse as directed by your Physician. Your Physician determines the medical need and wearing schedule for your orthosis, which in turn determines your individualized instructions. Following are general guidelines for wearing and caring for your cervical collar. Your doctor may alter or supersede any of them, and you should follow his/her directions carefully.

If you have not received them, replacement pads or liners are available for use under the collar. These will act as padding, protect the collar from body oils, and keep you drier from perspiration.

Your collar is only to be removed as permitted by your physician. If you are supposed to be wearing the collar full-time (for instance, after some surgeries), you must ask your physician if you can carefully remove the collar to bathe, clean the collar, or change the liners. If you must bathe with your cervical orthosis on, you may need a second one because the wet collar must air dry. Do not use a hair dryer or place near a heater. Other very warm locations like the trunk of a car can also damage your orthosis.

Your collar may fit correctly and still feel uncomfortable at first. If you are wearing the collar at night, you may find that it tends to move up and feel tighter under your chin, on your shoulders, or at the back of your head. Periodic re-positioning of the orthosis (pulling it down) may be necessary. Many people who have had surgery on their cervical spine or who have other conditions necessitating use of a cervical collar experience muscular shoulder pain as their body attempts to protect the head and neck with muscular action. This is normally not related to the collar and should decrease with time.

You may also experience some discomfort in other parts of your body in reaction to the new (corrected) alignment the orthosis is providing. If these conditions are severe or persist, contact your Orthotist.

Redness of the skin may develop under pressure areas of a new orthosis. Redness should lessen greatly or disappear in 10 to 30 minutes after the orthosis is removed, and as your tolerance increases, these areas may cease to occur at all. If the redness does not disappear or if your skin becomes sore or irritated, do not wear the orthosis (unless you have been instructed otherwise) and contact your Orthotist. Examine your skin frequently, at least two times a day.

Your orthosis may accumulate and absorb dirt and perspiration, and can be cleaned with a damp cloth and mild soap, or with rubbing alcohol. Make sure no soap residue remains, and allow the orthosis to dry at room temperature. If rubbing alcohol is used, it evaporates in the air and leaves no residue. Simply allow it adequate time to dry.

Please call Orthotic & Prosthetic Specialties, Inc. at (216) 531-2773 if you notice signs of excessive wear anywhere on your orthosis, if any fasteners are not secure or if you are having other difficulties or have questions about your orthosis. Do not attempt to adjust or repair your orthosis yourself. We will make every attempt to resolve any problem or answer any question as soon as possible.