

## RGO GUIDE

You have received an RGO (Reciprocating Gait Orthosis) 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 determine your individualized instructions. Following are general guidelines for wearing and caring for your RGO. Your doctor may alter or supersede any of them, and you should follow his/her directions carefully.

Your RGO is ineffective and dangerous (slippery) without shoes; therefore it should be worn with shoes at all times. All straps should be fastened snugly. You will probably require a shoe one or more sizes larger than usual to comfortably accommodate your orthosis. Your orthosis may fit and function differently depending on the size and style (width, depth, heel height) of shoe used. You will probably not be able to use your orthosis with spiked heels, sandals, slippers or most loafers. Put on the orthosis and then the shoes, making sure to loosen any laces or straps on the shoes first. Some twisting or “screwing” of the shoe may be necessary. This may be awkward or slightly uncomfortable until the foot and orthosis are in their final position inside the shoe.

Socks, stockings, legging, shorts and t-shirts worn under the orthosis will act as padding, make it easier to don (put on) and doff (take off), and, if cotton; help keep you drier from perspiration. Smooth out all wrinkles, keep the garments clean, and change them frequently. Using pure talcum powder or corn starch under the garments will keep them drier. Your RGO can function properly worn over or under clothing; you may prefer one or the other for comfort or appearance. If worn over clothing, smooth out wrinkles as much as possible. You will need instruction and/or assistance to don and doff your orthosis. Your Orthotist and especially your therapist can help determine the best technique for you. Your orthosis will have locking mechanisms at the hips and knees which will require practice or assistance to operate easily. Your therapist or Orthotist can help with learning this task.

Physical therapy is vitally important in both preparing (strengthening) you prior to using your RGO and training you in the complex task of standing, walking, transferring, sitting, getting up from the floor, and even falling in your orthosis. It is difficult or impossible to get the maximum benefit from your RGO without physical therapy.

Your orthosis may fit correctly and still feel uncomfortable at first. 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. Significant swelling of your legs or large changes in body weight may cause improper fit of your orthosis, making an adjustment necessary.

Your orthosis may accumulate and absorb dirt and perspiration, and can be wiped out with a damp cloth, mild soap, or rubbing alcohol. Make sure no soap residue remains, and allow the orthosis to dry at room temperature. Do not dry your orthosis with a hair dryer or place on or near a heater. Use silicone, graphite, Teflon, or very light household oil to lubricate joints and promptly wipe away excess. The plastic portions of your orthosis may become brittle and vulnerable to cracking in very cold temperatures. If possible, try to limit the stress placed upon your orthosis when cold.

Ask your Orthotist if you wish to have more literature concerning the RGO, including specifics of componentry, physical therapy, indications and contraindications, surgical interventions, and history of the system.

Please call Orthotic & Prosthetic Specialties, Inc. at 531-2773 if you notice signs of excessive wear anywhere on your orthosis, if any joints on your orthosis do not move freely, if there is a change in the amount of motion allowed, 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.