This information packet has been provided to you to explain the proposed course of treatment from casting to delivery, and to answer some questions about your new prosthesis. It includes the following topics:

Plan of Action

Importance of Shrinker Sock

Bandaging Techniques

Care and Use of Prosthesis

How to Adjust for Comfort

BK Do Not

AK Do Not
PLAN OF ACTION

Shrinking Down

You will use a stump shrinker sock and/or ace bandages until your residual limb (stump) volume stabilizes. This usually takes 2 to 4 weeks following surgery. Once your volume is stable, an impression (cast) of your residual limb is taken. This cast is an exact replica of your residual limb, and serves as the model from which your prosthesis will be made. Once the casting is completed, you will be given a return appointment for the check socket fitting. This cast is later filled with plaster, modified, and a diagnostic (check) socket is fabricated.

Check Socket

The check socket is usually completed a week after the cast is taken. At the check socket fitting appointment you will try on the diagnostic socket to evaluate the fit of the socket, and note any pressure points or areas of discomfort. If time allows, we will ‘walk & align’ the diagnostic prosthesis, and make any necessary adjustments. Once all adjustments have been made and the prosthesis is ‘dynamically’ (weigh bearing) aligned, the testing stage is complete and the definitive (final) prosthesis is ready to be fabricated.

Note: In some instances an additional appointment may be necessary, depending on the number of adjustments required or a change in your condition. Your prosthettist will inform you if this is necessary. Failure to comply with the instructions & guidelines provided by your prosthetist, therapist, and physician will delay your care.

Delivery of Finished Prosthesis

The definitive (final) prosthesis will be ready to be fitted approximately 2-3 weeks following the final check socket fitting. This delivery appointment is the final fitting appointment, and only minor adjustments can be made. You will be given a follow-up appointment to return in two weeks to evaluate the fit and performance of the prosthesis. You will receive final instructions and precautions concerning the care and use of your new prosthesis. Since this is a new prosthesis, it will take some time to become acclimated to it. It may be uncomfortable at first, but please wear the prosthesis each day as long as you can comfortably wear it. This will help you to adjust to the fit, and help to control any volume changes.

Follow ups

After the delivery of your prosthesis, you will have a follow-up appointment at the following intervals:

- 2 weeks post delivery
- 6 weeks post delivery
- 6 months post delivery
SHRINKER SOCK & BANDAGE TECHNIQUES

Shrinking Down - Why Is It Necessary?

One of the greatest challenges for an amputee and the treatment team is edema, (swelling of the residual limb). Edema is the accumulation of fluids in the stump. Its presence makes the fitting of the prosthesis difficult. Certain measures (such as wearing a shrinker sock, wrapping with a bandage, or elevating the limb) should be taken to control and reduce the amount of edema prior to the fabrication of the prosthesis.

STUMP SHRINKER SOCKS

Use Instructions

- The purpose of a shrinker sock is to reduce the edema (swelling) of your residual limb prior to the fabrication of your prosthesis. If this is not done, the prostheses will be too large within a couple of weeks. Wearing the prosthesis will further shrink your residual limb.

- Wear your shrinker sock 24 hours a day, if possible. Take it off only when you are bathing.

- **For Above Knee (AK) amputees:** the shrinker should be worn all the way up to the *groin*. If not, the part of the residual limb not contained within the shrinker sock will swell up, while the remainder shrinks down.

- **For Below Knee (BK) amputees:** the shrinker sock should be worn *past the knee joint*.

Care Instructions

- Machine-wash your shrinker sock frequently using the gentle or delicate cycle. This will help the fabric maintain its shape.

- Rinse well if you wash by hand. Do not wring out the shrinker sock as this will destroy the compression of the shrinker sock.

- Only use a mild detergent or soap in warm water.
BANDAGING TECHNIQUES

**Below Knee Amputees**

1- Start with the bandage held in place on the inside of the thigh just above the knee. Unroll the bandage so that it is laid diagonally down the outer side of the stump while maintaining two-thirds of the maximum stretch in the bandage.

2- Bring the bandage over the inner end of the stump, and diagonally up the outer side of the stump.

3- Bring the bandage under the back of the knee, and continue over the upper part of the kneecap and down under the back of the knee.

4- Bring the bandage diagonally down the back of the stump, and around over the end of the stump. Continue up the back of the stump to the starting point on the inside of the thigh. Repeat the sequence in a manner so that the entire stump is covered by the time the roll is used up. It is important that the tightest part of the bandage be at the end of the stump. The end of the bandage is held in place by a clip.
Above Knee Amputees

1- Place one end of a rolled 6-inch wide elastic bandage on the upper part of the thigh, and wrap it around the stump towards the rear.

2- Bring the roll through the legs and over the end of the front of the thigh.

3- Bring the roll across the back, and on across the lower stomach area.

4- Continue to wrap around the thigh, across the back and lower stomach area until the roll is suspended. Attach the end of the roll with a metal clip.

5- With a second roll, begin to wrap the stump from the upper outer surface diagonally toward the lower inner surface.

6- Bring the roll around the back of the stump, and upward diagonally.

7- Bring the roll behind the upper part of the stump.

8- Continue to wrap the stump in an overlapping fashion until the entire stump is covered. Fasten the end of the second bandage to the first bandage.
You have just been delivered a new prosthesis. This guide will provide you with some things to expect, and how to deal with each situation in order to minimize your discomfort in the first few weeks. Please carefully read the guidelines below to ensure you achieve the best results from your prosthesis.

**Care Of The Residual Limb**

- Your residual limb (stump) must be washed daily to avoid irritation and infection. Only use mild soap and warm water. The interior of the plastic socket (and the insert, where applicable) must also be kept clean by wiping with a towel dampened with warm water and mild soap.

- Visually inspect your stump daily before going to bed, and every time you take your prosthesis off. Any evidence of irritation, especially if it is over a bony area, is worth investigating.

  **Remember:** it takes 20 minutes to develop a sore, and 2-6 weeks for it to heal.

**If You Are A New Amputee**

For at least the *next six months* you should continue using your shrinker sock and/or bandage wrapping your residual limb at night and whenever the prosthesis is off. Not doing so will probably prevent you from being able to wear the prosthesis because your limb will be swollen.

**Never Attempt To Modify The Prosthesis!**

Never grind the socket, adjust the screws or hardware, or in any way modify the condition of the prosthesis. Doing so will not only void our work, but could cause the prosthesis to become unstable. A change as simple as a 1/4 of a turn on any one screw could throw the alignment off such that it will be dangerous for you to walk.
LEARN HOW TO ADJUST FOR COMFORT

Your residual limb is expected to continue shrinking down as you wear your new prosthesis. It will undergo volumetric changes even as you go about your day. It will usually shrink down more towards the end of the day, depending on your level of activity and the weather conditions. It also tends to swell up at night when you don’t have the prosthesis on (which is why wearing the shrinker sock is so important).

You should adjust for these changes by manipulating the number of socks you wear throughout the day.

**Add a sock** - if you feel excessive pressure in the following areas:

* The lower part of the knee cap (1)
* The front, bottom end of your residual limb (2)

![Diagram showing pressure points](image)

**Remove a sock** - if you feel excessive pressure in the following areas:

* The most prominent point of the front bone below the knee joint (3) [usually located about 1" below kneecap]

**NOTE:** If you were not able to achieve comfort by manipulating of the number of socks, please contact us. Frequent adjustments are often required, especially within the first year of being fitted with a new prosthesis.
DO NOT...

PLACE PILLOW UNDER BACK CURVING SPINE

REST STUMP ON CRUTCH HANDLE

PLACE PILLOW UNDER HIP

PLACE PILLOW BETWEEN THIGHS

ABDUCT STUMP
BELOW KNEE (BK) AMPUTEE

Do Not...

...hang stump over bed

...sit in wheelchair with stump flexed

...place pillow under hip or knee

...place pillow under back curving spine

...lie with knees flexed

...place pillow between thighs

...sit with knees crossed