

Troubleshooting splints and braces



What are some common problems for splints and braces and how to solve them?

These are general suggestions for problem solving common issues with splints and braces; however, you should follow the instructions of your health care provider or therapist with any splints or braces.

- What if splint or brace causes redness or skin breakdown:
 - ✓ Gently stretch the limb first.
 - ✓ Using two sets of hands can sometimes be helpful for proper application.
- How to manage new skin redness or breakdown from the splint or brace:
 - ✓ Always ensure skin is dry before applying.
 - ✓ Make sure the splint or brace was applied properly and assess if the skin breakdown is due to improper wear.
 - ✓ Take off the splint or brace, if redness disappears after a few hours, attempt use again as scheduled and reassess skin. If skin breakdown continues or worsens, discontinue use until skin is healed and seek advice from your health care provider or therapist.
- What if the splint or brace fits but is difficult to apply:
 - ✓ Gently stretch the limb first.
 - ✓ Use two hands and follow application instructions from your therapist or health care provider.
- How to problem solve when to wear the splint or brace:
 - ✓ Your therapist should have assigned a wear time; however if there is pain associated with this wear time, consult your health care provider or therapist for an alternative schedule.
 - ✓ If advised, gradually increase wear schedule in small increments to increase the wear tolerance.
 - ✓ Check to make sure the skin is staying free of breakdown.
 - ✓ Be sure to clarify when the splint needs to be worn:
 - During a specific activity
 - For prolonged stretch during sleeping hours.
- How to address soiled splints or braces:
 - ✓ Follow manufacturer's instructions for prefabricated splints or braces.
 - ✓ If a therapist made the splint or brace, they should advise on proper care.
 - ✓ As a general rule, do not wash in washing machine, hand wipe with gentle soap cleaner regularly and when soiled.
- What to do if splint or brace does not fit due to edema/swelling:
 - ✓ Try elevating the limb for an hour or so prior to brace or splint application to decrease swelling. If the limb continues to be swollen or swelling increases, stop splint use and consult your health care provider or therapist.
- How to problem solve through splint/brace wear after a medical complication:
 - ✓ In the case of a medical change (storming, infection, allergic reaction, and pain response), the splint or brace should be discontinued as wearing them may lead to additional discomfort.
 - ✓ Consult your health care provider or therapist when a medical change has occurred to determine when the splint or brace can be worn again.