

## **Use, Care and Maintenance of Your Thoracolumbosacral Orthosis (TLSO)**

**North Metro Orthotics and Prosthetics does not recommend driving while wearing the TLSO brace due to the restrictive movement of the upper body. Please consult your treating physician about wearing the TLSO brace while driving.**

Because a TLSO can be design with a variety of opening tailoring to a patient's injury, the below instructions on wearing and removing the brace is only for a posterior custom TLSO. When available, the literature on instructions of use, care and maintenance from the manufacturer will be provided to the patient, should the custom TLSO was manufactured by a vendor other than Sean Orthotics LLC.

All off the shelf (ots) TLSO instructions on use, care and maintenance will be provided verbally through the treating Orthotist. If available, literature on instructions of use, care and maintenance of the ots TLSO from the manufacture will be provided along with the brace.

### **What is a Thoracolumbosacral Orthosis (TLSO)**

A TLSO can be a custom-designed or ots brace that helps promote proper healing of the spine. The brace is designed to restrict or minimize unwanted movement of the vertebrae (bone) in your spine to help promote proper healing.

### **Wearing and removing your brace**

It is recommended that you wear a thin T-shirt to act as a barrier between your skin and the brace for additional protection.

**Please follow the instructions of the referring or treating physician on how long the brace should be worn and the activity limitations while wearing the brace.**

Have someone help you with putting on and removing the TLSO brace until you are deemed medically and physically safe to move your upper body by your treating physician.

After you are clear by your treating physician and can move your upper body, please follow the steps below for wearing and removing the TLSO brace.

1. Always wear a thin T-shirt under the brace for additional protection between your skin and the brace.
2. Hold the brace by the back opening and spread it open. Place the brace onto your body and gently release your hands from the opening.
3. Place both hands over the brace at the waistline. The waistline of the brace is indented and should fall in line with your waistline or waist groove. If the indentation of the brace does not fall in line with your waistline or waist groove, grab the brace underneath the two sides of the brace and gently move

the brace up and down until the brace comes into position.

4. After the brace is in the proper position, reach and tighten the straps on the back. If you are unable to perform this part of the task, please have someone help you to tighten the back straps. The straps should be tight but still allow you to breath comfortably.
5. Take a deep breath with the brace on and tighten. If you can't take a deep breath that means the brace is over tighten. Loosen the brace by loosening the straps on the back and repeat the process for until you can take a deep breath.

### Removing the TLSO

1. Loosen all straps on the back and spread open the brace, rotate the brace opening to the left or right side of your body and pull out the brace.

### Care and Maintenance of your TLSO

Proper care and maintenance of the TLSO increase the life of the brace, maintain proper functionality and reduces bacterial build up.

- At the end of each wear, remove the TLSO brace and air dry it.
- **(DO NOT WASH THE TLSO IN A WASHING MACHINE)** Clean your TLSO after wearing it by gently wipe down the TLSO, inside and outside, with a damp cloth (with or without mild soap).

- Wipe down the brace with a dry towel or cloth and air dry the TLSO brace. **(DO NOT DRY THE BRACE IN A DRYER).**

### Checking your skin

- Inspect all the skin that touches the TLSO. Look for red areas, skin irritation or swelling. Check the bottom and the sides of the foot as well.
- It is normal to have pressure mark and redness, but it should disappear within 20 to 30 minutes to be normal.
- If there are any pressure area, redness, skin irritation, skin break down and swelling that does not go away, stop wearing the TLSO and Immediately call the office for an assessment or consultation.
- Do not subject the TLSO to high temperatures such as inside a closed car on a hot sunny day near a heater or fireplace.
- Even after the break in period, continue to inspect your skin at the areas where the brace comes into contact and the TLSO for defects. If there is any signs of skin issue or brace defect, please contact the office.
- Inspect all areas of the skin where the brace contacts for excessive pressure marks, redness, skin irritation and break down.

- It's normal to have redness and pressure marks but they should disappear approximately in 30 minutes to be normal.
- If your skin is not normal and still has redness, excessive pressure marks, skin irritation and break down after 30 minutes of not

## **Special Instruction**

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**Please contact North Metro Orthotics and Prosthetics if you have any question on your TLSO.**

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