

WEARING INSTRUCTIONS FOR DENNIS BROWNE BOOTS AND BAR FOR THE TREATMENT OF CLUB FOOT

When your child enters the Maintenance Stage of the clubfoot treatment program, the brace wear part of the program will be implemented along with stretches and strengthening of your child's feet.

INITIAL FITTING PROCESS:

The goal of the boots and bar is to maintain clubfoot correction achieved through serial casting. The clinic team will determine the best time for your child to be fit with their first boots and bar. This phase of treatment is usually based on your child's corrected foot position and how well the heel has positioned after casting.

Sometimes, although the position of the foot and heel may not be ideal, further casting may be contraindicated due to skin irritation or other problems that may have been encountered.

In either case, close monitoring during the treatment with boots and bar will significantly prevent problems before they occur.

During the initial fitting of the boots and bar for your child, the certified orthotist will:

- size the boots and bar to your child's feet
- discuss appropriate socks for your child
- demonstrate and guide you in positioning your child's feet in the boots.

Progressing to the maintenance phase of bracing is a positive step, and it is important to note the following changes in treatment when going from casting to bracing:

- The boots and bar bracing require both feet to be fit with boots even if your child has only one club foot. Your orthotist will explain the differences between straight and reverse last boots depending on the prescription.
- There will be a bar connecting the boots to each other, maintaining an ideal distance between the heels, to ensure the hip, knee, and ankle joints are aligned.
- The bar will allow outward rotation of the ankle and foot to counter the internal rotation of the clubfoot, improving alignment to the knee and encouraging a dorsiflexed ankle.
- During the treatment, the clubfoot will start out at 45 degrees of external rotation and will increase over the treatment period based on the doctor's recommendation. In the case of a single clubfoot, the unaffected foot will be set in neutral alignment so that the foot is in line with the knee.

- To ensure that your child is tolerating the treatment well, the boots and bar should be removed several times throughout the day to check your child's skin for any redness that does not dissipate or that is over a bony area.
- After bathing your baby, and before reapplying the boots, make sure that the feet are thoroughly dry.
- Initially, you are encouraged to raise your child's feet with a small blanket under the boots and bar to counter any swelling after cast removal.

At any time during the fitting process or afterwards, please feel free to ask any questions or receive any clarifications that you require.

PLACING THE BOOTS PROPERLY ON YOUR CHILD'S FEET

Your orthotist will demonstrate the following points:

- ✓ Loosen the boot laces and secure the ankle strap at the very last hole on the strap. Gently widen the opening of the boot at the top with the tongue at a midpoint of the wide opening.
- ✓ Position your child's hip and knee into flexion with the foot in line with the knee. This will make it much easier to position the foot into the boot.
- ✓ Stretch the foot gently into the corrected position and place into the boot making sure that you are in a position that does not stress your child's foot to turn in with respect to the knee.
- ✓ Holding the front of the ankle into the boot firmly with your thumb, make certain that the heel is touching the bottom and then slide the heel to the very back of the boot.
- ✓ Tighten the ankle strap to hold the foot in place, and without releasing your hold of the foot in the ideal position, gently center the tongue and tighten the ankle strap again until you reach the appropriate mark on the strap as indicted by your orthotist.
- ✓ When the ankle strap is tightened correctly, you should be able to wiggle the tongue slightly and get a half finger's width between your child's ankle and the tongue. With the laces evenly snugged up to hold the entire foot in the boot, you may test how secure the foot is within the boot by gently tugging at the boot. It should not slip on the foot.
 - Even though it may seem kinder to place the boot on loosely, it will result in skin problems, blistering and incorrect positioning.
- ✓ Check that the toes are not curled under and are laid out flat and looking comfortable. Otherwise, reposition before pulling laces snug.
- ✓ Repeat this process on the other side.
- ✓ Place the bar into position at the designated external rotation as marked or set on the bar.

The boots and bars have been kindly donated by previous users and/or the hospital. For this reason there is no charge for them in the treatment of your child. Please take good care of them and advise the orthotist of any problems.

Your child will need a few different sizes of the boots as they grow, and the bar will need to be adjusted in length as well as the outward rotation. This will be determined during your visits to the clinic, however, you may make an appointment with the orthotist only if you require changes to the boots or bar due to growth in-between clinic appointments.

If there are no available boots in your child's required size, you may need to purchase one or more boot and/or bar. Your orthotist will discuss this with you if it is necessary.

During the initial adjustment period, if your child is crying and will not settle down:

- Check that the boots are on properly. If necessary, remove the boot, check the skin and reapply.
- If there is redness or irritation, check to make sure that the boot had been applied correctly, then position correctly and monitor.
- If your child's foot is slipping out of the boot (if the foot is further back than the marked line on the boot), reposition foot and attempt tightening the ankle strap one or more holes tighter. The boot may have become looser as the foot adjusts to the shape or swelling decreases. Monitor closely.

If necessary, the bar may be removed temporarily and reapplied when baby settles.

- If you continue to have problems, call or email your orthotist with photos or descriptions of the problem that you are experiencing.

Outside of clinic days, you can contact your orthotist(s) at their office located outside of the hospital. Please see names and contact information below:

Serap Kaga B.Sc.,C.O.(c)
Jarrod Tucker, C.O.(c)
Shannon McCann, B.Sc.Phys.,Orthotic Resident

Ortho Dynamics Inc.
2810 Grandview Hwy.
Tel: 604-454-1177 Fax: 604-454-1175
Email: orthodynamics@shawcable.com