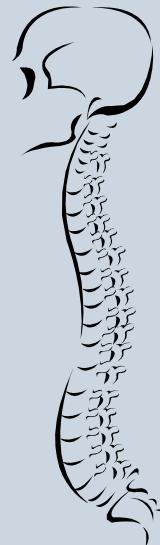


Getting Back To Life: How To Care For Yourself After Back Surgery



How To Put On Your Back Brace

Freedom 631™ LSO Spinal Orthosis

- Apply the brace while sitting up on the side of the bed.**
- Open up the brace and apply after centering the back panel and assuring that the bottom is resting on top of the buttocks.

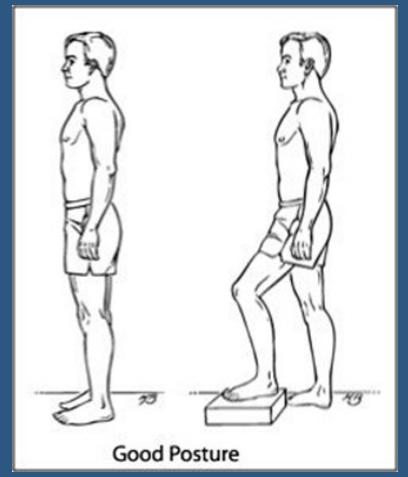
- Once in place, close up the brace with the rigid anterior panel centered in the front.
- Grab a hold of each strap (right and left) and pull upward and outward at a 45-degree angle.
- Keeping the tension in the straps, secure each one over the top of the front of the brace.

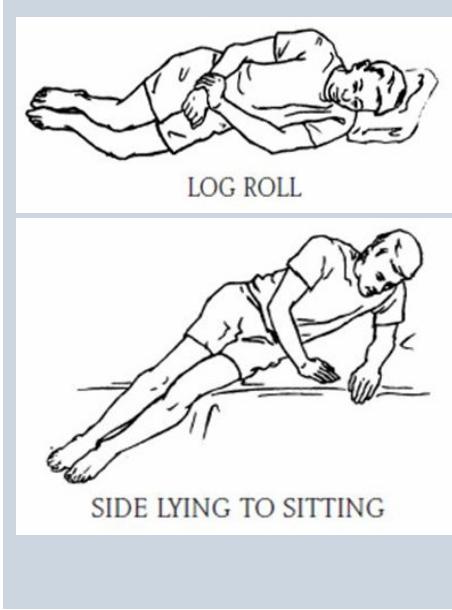
Please Note:

*Individual recommendations may vary. Always wear the brace as prescribed by your Physician.***

How To Move About

1. While standing, change positions often to keep from getting stiff.
2. Wear your brace at all times while standing and walking.
3. Wear sturdy, flat shoes.
4. Don't lock your knees. Keep your legs slightly bent so that your leg muscles can support your body weight.
5. When standing, keep your feet shoulder-width apart with one foot slightly ahead of the other.





How To Move In Bed

1. Sleeping positions that are best for the low back are as follows:
 - Lying on your side with your knees and hips slightly bent and a pillow between your knees.
 - Lying on your back with a pillow underneath your knees.
2. Lying on your stomach is NOT recommended. However, if you find it necessary, a small pillow should be placed underneath your hips to reduce the low back curve.
3. When lying in bed, do not reach overhead or rest both arms behind your head, as this increases the low back curve.
4. When getting out of bed, roll onto your side and move to the edge of the bed, keeping your back straight and your hips and knees bent. Use your arms to push yourself up into a sitting position while lowering your feet to the floor. This is known as the log roll technique.
5. When getting into bed, sit at the edge of the bed and lower your upper body onto one arm as both of your legs come up.

How To Sit and Stand

1. Use straight-backed chairs with armrests rather than stuffed chairs. As needed, use pillows for extra support. Support your arms on armrests, pillows or rolled towels.
2. Sit with your bottom as far back into the seat as possible.
3. Keep your back as straight as possible when sitting or standing. When rising to stand, scoot to the edge of the chair, place your feet shoulder-width apart with one foot slightly ahead of the other, and use your leg strength to stand. Keep your head up while rising.
4. When sitting, keep your knees bent with your feet flat on the floor. Do not sit with your feet propped up.
5. Do NOT sit for an extended period of time.



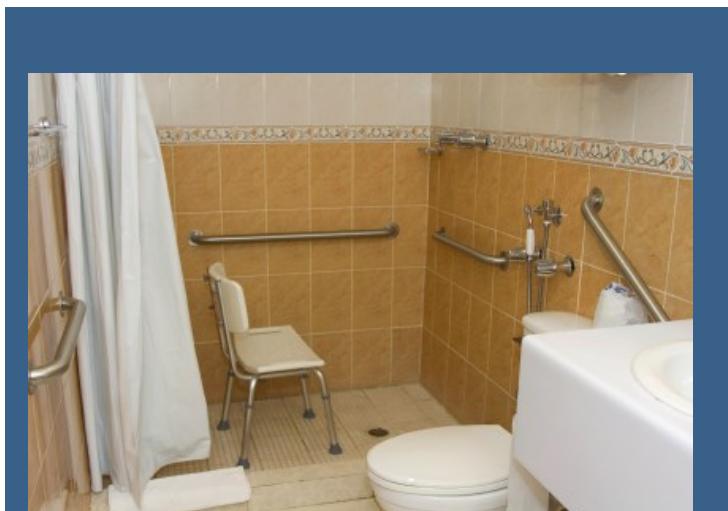
Using The Bathroom

1. Use an elevated toilet seat or commode to raise the level of the toilet. Do NOT lean over your legs while sitting.
2. Wear your brace while using the bathroom.
3. Personal hygiene is done easier while standing. While wiping, bend from the knees rather than at the hips. A long-handled device may help to reach all areas.
4. The use of pre-moistened, flushable wipes is strongly recommended.



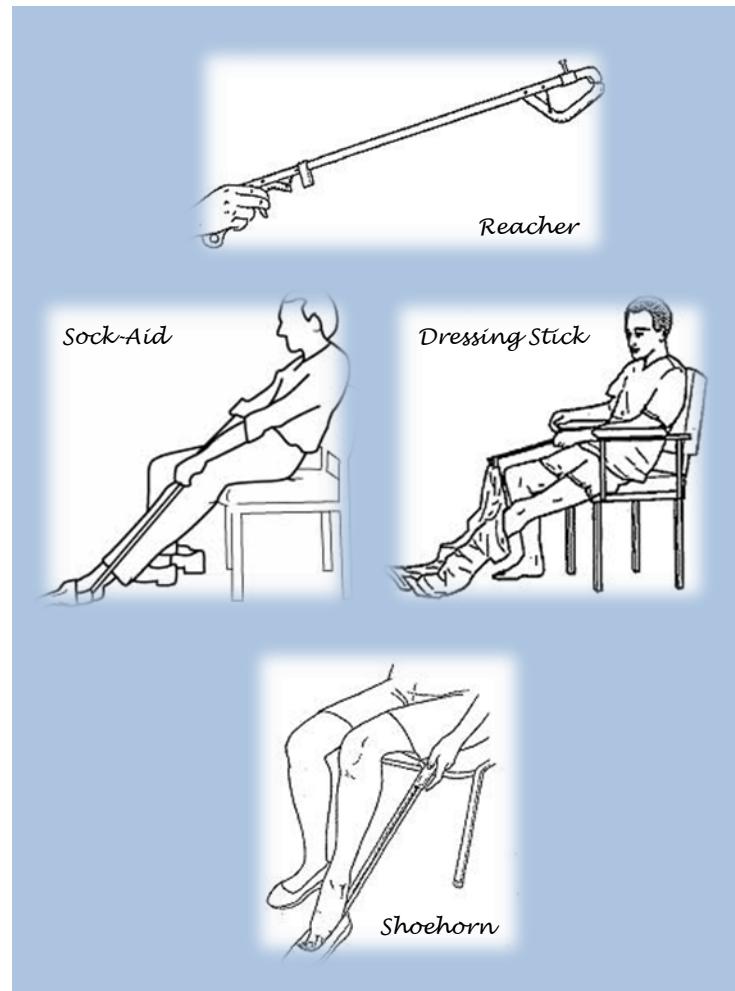
Showering / Bathing

1. Do NOT sit on the bottom of the tub. In accordance with the recommendations of your physician/therapist, either stand to shower or sit on a shower chair. Having grab bars in place will make it easier to get in and out of the tub.
2. Make sure there is a non-skid surface on which to stand.
3. As a safety precaution, have someone with you for the first few times you get in and out of the shower. Wear your brace to climb in and out of the tub, then remove before showering/bathing.
4. When washing your back, a towel is recommended. A long-handled brush is also helpful when washing your legs and feet.
5. Hair washing is best done in the shower. Do NOT lean over the sink to wash your hair.
6. While standing at the sink to brush your teeth, wash your face and/or shave, bend at your knees and hips rather than bending your back. You may also setup a chair in front of the sink to complete these tasks.



How To Get Dressed

1. Choose comfortable, loose-fitting clothing with elastic waistbands. Wear socks only if necessary. Choose slip-on shoes that are sturdy and have backs. Backless shoes are not recommended because they are unsafe.
2. Wear a t-shirt underneath the brace. Put your shirt and brace on while sitting at the edge of the bed.
3. You can put pants, socks and shoes on a number of ways:
 - Lie on your back in bed, bend your legs.
 - Sit in a sturdy chair or at the edge of the bed, keeping your back straight. Bend your knees, placing each ankle on the opposite knee, one at a time.
 - Use various dressing devices, such as a reacher, sock-aid, long-handled shoehorn or dressing stick, and follow the recommendations of your Occupational Therapist.
4. Pull underwear and pants up over the top of the brace.



Remember . . .



NO BENDING . . NO LIFTING . . NO TWISTING



How To Work In The Kitchen

1. Keep everyday items within reach.
2. Do NOT carry heavy items. Use a rolling cart or slide items along the countertops.
3. Organizing your cooking tasks to help minimize back and forth steps around the kitchen.
4. Do NOT bend over the sink. Raise items in the sink using an upside-down dish drainer. In order to reduce pressure placed on your back, place one foot on a low stool or the ledge below the sink.

Helpful Adaptive Equipment:

- ◆ Long-handled Sponge
- ◆ Reacher
- ◆ Sock-aid
- ◆ Dressing Stick
- ◆ Long-handled Shoehorn
- ◆ Raised Toilet Seat
- ◆ "3-in-1" Commode
- ◆ Shower Chair
- ◆ Hand-held Shower Spray
- ◆ Toilet Aid



How To Drive/Get Into A Car

1. Get into the car by sitting on the side of the seat and turning into the car, keeping your knees together at all times.
2. When driving, keep the seat as close to the pedals as possible. This increases hip and knee bending.
3. Wear your brace and your seatbelt.
4. DO NOT DRIVE UNTIL YOUR PHYSICIAN ALLOWS!

Do NOT attempt to drive until your Physician has cleared you to do so!