



Guide to Gaiters



What are Gaiters?

Gaiters are fabric splints which are worn on either the arms or legs and are designed to keep the elbows or knees straight. The reason for needing to keep these joints in a straight position can vary and the orthotist and/or physiotherapist will be able to explain the reasons.

What is the entitlement?

The entitlement is for one single gaiter or one pair of gaiters if both limbs are affected. A second/replacement item or pair will only be provided if:

- *The orthoses are required for a long period*
- *The originals are deemed to be clinically ineffective*
- *If the original orthoses are beyond repair*

How should the gaiters be worn?

- Undo all velcro straps and lay the gaiter out on an appropriate flat surface with the lining side facing up
- Straighten the limb carefully (arm or leg) and place it onto the gaiter, being careful to ensure that the narrowest part (the bottom) is in line with the wrist or ankle. If you find this confusing, ask your orthotist to mark it on your gaiter.
- Wrap the gaiter around the limb, ensuring the tongue section is placed underneath the overlap
- Fasten all velcro straps securely but not over tight (comfortably firm is a good guide)



What do I need to do?

How should I care for the gaiters?

- Any removable stiffening strips should be taken out, making note of the pocket from which they came.
- The gaiters should ideally be hand washed in lukewarm water, using a gentle detergent.
- Allow to dry naturally, away from direct heat sources such as the radiator.
- Once dry, replace all stiffening strips into their original pockets.
- You are responsible for looking after the gaiters and returning them for repair as and when necessary.

What problems should I be aware of?

If you notice any of the following, please contact the Orthotics department as soon as possible on the telephone number at the start of this leaflet:

- Skin redness that doesn't fade after 15-20 minutes
- Sores or blisters on the skin
- Pain, irritation or rubbing
- Any damage to the gaiters

Further appointments

You will not be given a further appointment automatically. However, if you feel your child's condition has not improved, has worsened or are experiencing problems with the gaiters you can ask to see the orthotist for a review by telephoning the orthotic department where you had your original appointment.

Children's Physiotherapy Service

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