

## Introduction

This brace has been prescribed by your orthopaedic consultant to you due to a broken bone (vertebrae) in your back. This brace aims to support your back, giving your bone time to heal. The same way a cast would work after breaking an ankle or wrist.

This leaflet will provide information on how to manage your brace at home, however

**you should follow all instructions given by your orthopaedic consultant and his/her team**

even if different to information provided in this leaflet.

## Guidance

Your brace will have been sized and fitted for you by a physiotherapist. You will have been shown how to put the brace on and off prior to discharge from hospital.

The brace is normally worn for between 6 and 12 weeks. When you see the orthopaedic team as an outpatient in fracture clinic, and they are happy with the healing of the bone, they will refer you to physiotherapy to begin weaning from the brace.

This is a gradual process which will take place over a few weeks.

## Complications

If you experience any one or more of the following signs and symptoms, seek medical attention immediately:

- Sudden loss of feeling in your legs
- Sudden loss of strength in your legs
- Altered sensation around your private area.
- Loss of control of bladder or bowel – unable to go or unable to stop yourself from going to the toilet.
- Sudden changes in your walking pattern or difficulty controlling your walking pattern.
- Pins and needles/numbness in your limbs.

## Contact Details

If you have any concerns or if you experience any problems with your brace please contact:

CUH Physiotherapy Department

021 4922400

Notes:



**'Flex'**

**Spinal Brace**

Patient Information Leaflet

## Putting on your brace



Place both arms through the straps, like putting on a backpack

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Wrap the Velcro belt around your waist

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Tighten the belt with the "Pull Tabs" until you feel secure whilst still being able to take a deep breath. Attach the tabs to the front of the brace



Standing up straight with shoulders back, tighten the shoulder straps by pulling down

## Removing your brace

1. Undo the "Pull Tabs" from the front of the brace.
2. Open the belt around your waist.
3. Remove the shoulder straps as if taking off a backpack.

## Skin Care Advice

You should wear a tight-fitting vest or t-shirt underneath your brace.

The brace should not rub against your skin.

Check your skin regularly for any signs of irritation i.e. redness, itching and soreness.

You may remove your brace for washing and sleeping.

## DO:

- ✓ Wear the brace throughout the day. It may be removed at night for sleeping.
- ✓ Remain active by taking short walks, little and often, appropriate to your fitness level.
- ✓ Sit in an upright position or in a higher chair, making it easier to rise from.
- ✓ Expect some discomfort as the brace is designed to limit your movement.

## DO NOT:

- ✗ Lift any heavy objects.
- ✗ Bend forward too much.
- ✗ Attempt to adjust the sizing of your brace at the back.
- ✗ Stop wearing the brace until instructed by your consultant
- ✗ Remain in bed while wearing the brace as you will lose strength and fitness.
- ✗ Stay in prolonged positions such as sitting.
- ✗ Take part in contact sports or dangerous activities.
- ✗ Smoke as this will delay healing time.