

# Spinal Brace

**This leaflet explains more about spinal braces for treatment of Scoliosis. If you have any further questions, please speak to the Orthotist caring for you.**

## What is involved?

Scoliosis is an abnormal sideways curvature of the spine that, when measured by x-ray, is greater than 10 degrees. Scoliosis may also involve twisting of the spine (rotation). If clinically appropriate, a custom spinal brace will be made from a plastic material with a softer inside foam. Depending on the design it may have straps at the front, back or sides of the body.

## Why are spinal braces used?

To prevent the scoliosis curve from worsening during growth spurts.

## How to apply the spinal brace:

You may need assistance to put your brace on and off to begin with but with practice you will likely be able to do it yourself.

1. A tight-fitting cotton vest must be worn under the orthosis.
2. Identify top from the bottom and the back from front.
3. The brace is flexible allowing it to be stretched open to make putting it on easier.
4. Make sure the waist groove is sitting at the waist and ensure that the brace is not twisted.
5. Fasten velcro straps. To get the best results the straps should be fastened as firmly as tolerated.
6. Fasten the middle strap located at the waist, followed by the top and bottom straps.

## Wearing your spinal brace:

The orthosis will apply pressure to the body to enable the spine to be held in the best position. It is important to get used to wearing it slowly. It is expected that the brace will eventually be worn full time, day and night unless advised otherwise.

- Begin wearing the brace at night only.
- Once overnight wear is tolerated, increase wear to include a couple of hours during the day.
- Each day slowly increase the hours wearing the orthosis until full time wear is achieved.

- Weekends are a good time to increase wearing time, as the brace can be removed and reapplied later in the day if discomfort is experienced.
- Once the orthosis is tolerated over the weekend trial wearing the orthosis at school.
- The orthosis can be removed for bathing and sporting activities.

## **Skin care:**

- The brace will cause areas of redness which should disappear within an hour of removing the spinal brace.
- Skin should be monitored daily to ensure the brace is not causing any broken skin or blisters.
- If redness is persisting for longer than an hour or breaking the skin, remove the brace and contact your orthotist for advice as soon as possible.

## **How to care for your spinal brace:**

- The spinal brace should be cleaned daily.
- Use warm soapy water and a damp cloth to clean the orthosis.
- Rinse well and towel dry before putting the orthosis back on.
- Do not use heat to dry the brace.

## **Reviews and follow ups:**

- We will review your spinal brace every 6 months to check comfort and function.
- Sometimes we will organise a review earlier if you have had a recent X-ray.

## **Contact us:**

If you have any questions or concerns about orthotics, please contact admin on 020 8487 6056/6033 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4pm). Out of hours, please email: [orthotics.qmh@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:orthotics.qmh@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

## **Additional services**

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### **NHS Choices**

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### **NHS 111**

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

### **AccessAble**

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



**Reference:** OFT\_SPBR\_01   **Published:** January 2026   **Review date:** January 2028