

Exeter Mobility Centre Prosthetic Service

Caring for your Residual Limb

Looking after your residual limb

It is important to keep your residual limb clean and to check carefully for any signs of rubbing from your prosthesis. This is especially important if you have impaired sensation in your limb.

We advise that you:

- Wash your residual limb every day with warm water and a mild soap.
- Always ensure your skin is dry before putting on your prosthesis.
- Use clean socks on your residual limb every day. The sock should fit firmly (not tightly) with no wrinkles.
- Use moisturising cream on your skin at night. If your skin is very dry you can use a little moisturising cream in the daytime
- Examine your skin daily for signs of rubbing. If you find any blistering or skin breaks, contact reception on **01392 547400** and, if necessary, stop wearing your prosthesis.
- If your residual limb perspires excessively, you can use a non-perfumed anti-perspirant for sensitive skin. Do ask your prosthetist for further advice.

Looking after your remaining leg

- Wash your foot daily, dry thoroughly and inspect for sore areas.
- Wear socks made of natural fibres such as wool or cotton, and avoid any tight elastic tops or garters as these may constrict your circulation.

- Ensure your shoes are not too tight and that they do not rub your skin. Soft leather is best and lace-ups give more support.
- Cut toe nails with great care. If you are diabetic or have poor circulation, this is best done by a chiropodist.
- Avoid excessive heat such as a hot water bottle or sitting in front of the fire.
- Avoid tight bed clothes pressing on your toes as this can make them sore.
- Please ask your prosthetist if you require any further advice.

Socks for your residual limb

Most prosthetic users need to wear a sock to protect their residual limb and make the socket of the prosthesis as comfortable as possible. The sock provides some cushioning and also allows air to circulate whilst absorbing perspiration.

Types of sock available

We stock a range of socks for your residual limb and your prosthetist will advise you on the most suitable type for you.

The range includes wool, cotton terry, thin cotton, stretchy nylon and flat nylon. On average, a single amputee requires up to 10 socks a year, although we do not impose restrictions on the number of socks issued. You may need to be seen for a review if the use seems excessive as the socket may need attention.

You should wear a clean sock every day in order to give your skin the best protection. When washing your socks, follow the washing instructions for your particular type of sock. Some socks are machine washable. If not, or if there are no instructions with the sock, then hand wash them using warm water and a gentle detergent. Rinse thoroughly with water. Roll in a dry towel to remove excess water and do not wring out, as this will distort their shape. Pull into shape whilst damp and dry on a flat surface away from direct heat. Do not tumble dry as this can cause shrinkage.

Further supplies

If your socks are becoming worn or misshapen, please contact the Exeter Mobility Centre for further supplies which can be posted to you or collected.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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