Wearing and Caring For Your BELOW-KNEE PROSTHESIS
These general guidelines are a resource as you begin wearing your below-knee prosthesis. Our goal is to ensure your well-being and to help you regain an active lifestyle. Please follow all instructions from your doctor, prosthetist and therapist as each prosthetic system is unique.

Always feel free to speak with your prosthetist about any questions or concerns, and keep the following in mind:

- Gradually increase wearing time with a new prosthesis.
- If you notice any damage or unusual noises from your prosthesis, call our office as soon as possible.
- If you gain or lose weight make an appointment to check your fit.
- Visit your prosthetist every six months for a check-up, even if everything is going well.
- Inform our office if you are moving so we can help you arrange for care at another of our more than 700 Hanger Clinic offices nationwide.
- Follow all your physician’s orders first and foremost, and contact him or her in case of emergency. If you experience any pain or skin problems on your limb related to the prosthesis, please contact us.

Learn more about living with your new prosthesis at HangerClinic.com/LivingWithLimbLoss
GEL LINERS

If you have been given a gel liner, roll it directly onto your leg touching your skin. Attention to detail is very important to ensure proper fit of the prosthesis. Your limb should be clean, dry, and free of lotions before applying the liner.

Application of the gel liner
Roll the liner inside out completely so the gel is facing outward. Place the liner at the end of the residual limb and gently roll the liner on so that there are no wrinkles or trapped air. If your liner has a pin, be sure that it is lined up correctly with the end of your limb.

If you notice redness or tingling at the end of the limb after use, try adding a sock and donning again, making sure there is no extra space between the end of your limb and the end of the liner while wearing. If the issue continues, contact your prosthetist.

SUSPENSION SLEEVES

Suspension sleeves go on the outside of your socket to hold the prosthesis on your leg.

Application of the sleeve
Turn the sleeve inside-out over the socket so that half of the sleeve is in contact with the socket. Place your limb into the socket. If there is excessive movement of the limb or space around your limb within the socket, use the appropriate amount of socks to adjust the volume.

Gently roll the sleeve onto the thigh, making sure to eliminate all wrinkles. At least two inches of the sleeve should be in contact with the skin in order to hold proper suspension.
PROSTHETIC SOCKS

If you have been given prosthetic socks to maintain the comfort and performance of your prosthesis, you should add or remove socks to adjust the fit as instructed by your prosthetist. Your residual limb may change in size and shape over the course of the day or from day to day. This normal fluctuation happens due to activity, fluid retention, temperature and weight changes. If your limb gets smaller over time, you may need to wear additional socks to fill the extra space and possibly get evaluated for a new socket. Once you reach 8 to 10 ply of socks, please see your prosthetist for an adjustment.

When should you add a sock?
Adding a sock can aid in limb comfort, protection and suspension by increasing the tightness of the socket and keeping you from falling in too far. Signs that your limb is falling too far into the socket include:

- Pain at the bottom of your limb or feeling your limb hit the bottom of your socket
- A feeling of looseness or visible gapping while standing
- Your limb “clicks” into the socket too quickly (if you are using a pin system)

Which sock should you add?
Socks have different colors for different thicknesses or “ply.” Start by adding a 1-ply sock and increase ply as needed. Your socket should fit snug to your limb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sock Thread Color</th>
<th>White/Yellow</th>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Blue</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thickness</td>
<td>1 ply</td>
<td>3 ply</td>
<td>5 ply</td>
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</tbody>
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Socks can be worn in multiples. For example, wearing a green and a blue sock at the same time means the wearer has applied 8 ply of socks.

When should you remove a sock?
Remove a sock if your limb is not getting all the way into the socket.

This happens due to activity, fluid retention, temperature and weight changes and is perfectly normal. If your limb gets smaller over time, you may need to wear additional socks to fill the space created from the change in your limb.

IT IS A GOOD HABIT TO CARRY SOCKS WITH YOU WHEN YOU ARE OUT OF THE HOUSE IN CASE OF DISCOMFORT.

Add socks over the liner and not directly on the skin, unless otherwise instructed.
CARING FOR YOUR SKIN

Break-In Period
Your prosthetist will recommend a schedule to gradually increase the amount of time you spend in your new prosthesis each day, including sitting, standing and walking time. A general rule of thumb is to wear it for 1/2 to 1 hour each in the morning and the afternoon on the first day, and then to increase the morning and afternoon wear time by 1 hour each day until you’ve reached a full day of wear. Be sure to check your skin after each wearing period.

Skin Inspection
It is very important to keep a close eye on your skin. Check your skin several times a day, using a mirror to inspect the bottom of your limb. If you see blisters, broken skin or red spots that do not clear up within 30 minutes after removing the prosthesis, do not wear your prosthesis until you speak with your prosthetist or until the skin heals completely.

Sweat
Sweating is common, especially in hot weather. You may experience more sweating than normal at first.

DON’T WORRY! YOUR BODY WILL TYPICALLY ADJUST TO PRODUCE LESS SWEAT AS YOU ADJUST TO WEARING THE PROSTHESIS.

If it continues and you are concerned, talk to your prosthetist about recommended solutions.

Swelling
Your residual limb will go through a maturation period during the first few months to a year of prosthesis wear. If you experience swelling, try wearing your shrinker when your prosthesis is off, including when you sleep.
CARING FOR YOUR SUPPLIES

Sleeves & Liners
The gel portion of sleeves and liners need to be cleaned daily to prevent odors and bacteria growth. You will be given two liners to rotate every day so that you always have a clean, dry liner.

Turn the sleeve or liner inside out and wash the gel side with warm water and mild soap using your hand or a soft wash cloth. Be careful not to rub or scrub too hard, which can damage the gel.

Rinse the sleeve well with a gentle stream of water but do not submerge it. Always hang or lay to dry with the fabric side facing out to prevent the gel from cracking.

ONCE A WEEK, YOU MAY WIPE THE GEL OF THE SLEEVE AND LINER WITH RUBBING ALCOHOL AND A SOFT CLOTH.

Handle your liner and other supplies with care to avoid tears and holes. Once you see or feel wear spots, contact your prosthetist.

Sock Tips
Socks worn directly on the skin should be washed at least once a day in order to maintain good hygiene of the limb. Rotate the use of the socks as to not wear out any one too quickly.

Wash by hand with mild soap and water; and lay flat to dry. Avoid wringing them out or placing in the dryer as this may cause the elastic to wear out.

Socket
Each day you should wipe down both the inside and outside of your socket with a soft cloth to maintain cleanliness and extend the life of your prosthesis and supplies. It is common to clean the socket at night with soapy water or alcohol, leaving ample time for drying before using again. Do not submerge the prosthesis in water as most prostheses are NOT waterproof.

Shoes
Changing shoes can have a dramatic effect on how your prosthesis functions. Bring the various shoes you would like to wear to our office with your prosthesis so we can adjust both shoes with heel wedges or the prosthetic side with a forefoot wedge.

Prosthetist Name: _______________________

Phone Number: _______________________

Special Instructions: _______________________

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EMPOWERING HUMAN POTENTIAL
FOR OVER 155 YEARS

Hanger Clinic® is committed to helping you reach your full potential by providing the latest prosthetic technology to restore your mobility and independence, as well as peer-to-peer support to help you transition to a lifestyle that helps move you forward. With our nationwide network, you can expect the same excellent care across the U.S. that you receive in your own neighborhood.

SUPPORT FROM YOUR PEERS

The Hanger Clinic AMPOWER® program provides amputees with peer mentorship, educational resources and community events. Start today by speaking with one of over 1,000 trained peer mentors nationwide and connecting with over 7,500 others with similar experiences in our private, password-protected e-community. Visit EmpoweringAmputees.org or call 1-844-AMPOWER to learn more.