



Family Education Sheet



Home Care Instructions for Patients with a Bledsoe Brace/Hinged Knee Brace

A Bledsoe brace (also called a hinged knee brace) is a piece of equipment worn on the knee. It is used to help keep the knee stable, or when your child needs a fixed or limited range of motion (how much the knee can bend).

Before your child goes home from the hospital you should:

- Know how to safely put on and remove your child's brace.
- Check your child's skin to make sure that his/her brace fits well.
- Know your child's range of motion. At the hinges of the brace, there are settings called flexion (bending) and extension (straightening out). Check these settings every day and do not change them unless asked to do so. If your child is using a continuous passive motion device (CPM), the flexion and extension settings on the CPM should match those settings on the brace.
- Know when the brace should be locked (such as when your child is walking) and when it should be unlocked (such as during range of motion exercises or when the CPM is being used). There is a lock above each hinge that can be released by pressing both locks up or down.
- Review your child's restrictions with your nurse. You should know how much weight your child can bear (stand) and how active your child can be.
- Ask your nurse any questions you have about your child's brace.



When your child is home from the hospital you should:

- Make sure your child's Bledsoe brace is tight enough to provide support, but not too tight. It shouldn't restrict blood flow (circulation). The straps and Velcro® on the brace can be adjusted.
- Make sure the brace doesn't slip. It should be close to the skin, especially at the calf. When you put on the brace, tighten the straps closest to the toes first.
- Remove your child's Bledsoe brace every 4 hours for skin checks and sponge baths or showers. Redness that does not go away or skin irritation might mean the brace is on too tight, your child may need more breaks from the brace, or that the brace isn't right for your child.
- Your child's brace should be worn at all times, except during skin checks and bathing (unless you are told differently).

Home Care Instructions for Patients with a Hinged Knee Brace

Call your doctor or nurse if:

- Your child has any new skin issues. Measure the affected area and describe the tissue when you call.
- The brace causes your child pain or serious discomfort.
- Your equipment is broken or soiled.
- You have any questions or concerns.

Numbers to Call

- **Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:00pm:** Call the Orthopedic Clinic at 617-355-6021.
- **Weekdays after 5:00pm, weekends and holidays:** Call the hospital page operator at 617-355-6369 and ask to speak with the orthopedic resident on-call.

A [Spanish](#) version of this is available from your provider

Send comments or questions to: Familyed@childrens.harvard.edu
