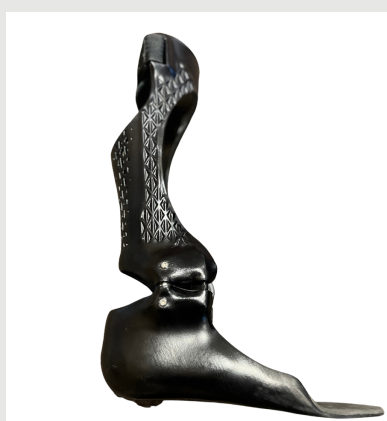


AFOs (Ankle-Foot-Orthoses)

WHAT IS AN AFO?

Ankle-foot orthoses (AFOs) are among the most commonly prescribed lower limb orthoses. There is a selection of braces that are prefabricated and available to purchase however most often they are custom made for each individual to encompass the foot, ankle and leg, finishing just below the knee.



What is AFOs used for?

AFOs have been used for many years to help manage the gait (walking pattern). They are used to reduce unwanted movements associated with muscle imbalances, weakness or abnormal tone and to assist in achieving improved movement and function.

How do you know if you would benefit from an AFO?

- Functionally, are you having challenges with balance, walking, running or walking on uneven ground?
- Do you have loss of strength, loss of sensation or pain in your foot?
- Do you have a foot drop?

They're designed to:

- Alter foot function such as correcting a foot drop
- Change foot alignment
- Realign ankle position
- Shift knee alignment
- Protect or accommodate the foot
- Offload a sensitive segment or painful region of the foot

Who do I see if I think I might benefit from an AFO?

Your physician, physiotherapist or occupational therapist can recommend a product or refer you to a certified orthotist who manufactures these devices.



Passive Assessment:

- Range of motion
- Pain
- Proprioception (Decreased proprioception is when there is a reduction in the sense that tells the body where you are in space.)
- Sensation
- Leg length

Active Assessment:

- Level of mobility
- Gait pattern
- Compensation mechanisms of instability
- Risk of injury/falls
- Muscle strength
- Balance

Important Consideration:

- Your ability to put on and take off the device should be considered.

Funding may be available through an assistive devices program associated with your provincial healthcare program or through your personal insurance.

