

optimus
PROSTHETICS

Patient
Education
Packet

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Unfortunately, sores and skin irritation are not uncommon among amputees. Always check your skin before and after prosthetic use and follow these guidelines to take care of your skin.



DAILY SKIN CARE



1. Every day, or more often if necessary, wash your residual limb with a mild or antibacterial soap and lukewarm water. Rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove all soap.
2. Dry your skin by patting it with a towel. Be sure your residual limb is completely dry before putting on your prosthesis. Allowing 15 minutes of air-drying before applying your prosthesis should ensure that the skin is thoroughly dry.
3. Consult your prosthetist before using moisturizing creams or lotions. Vaseline or petroleum-based lotions degrade some types of prosthetic liners. Only use softening lotions when your skin is at risk of cracking or peeling. If a moisturizing lotion is needed, it is best to apply it at night or at other times when you will not be wearing your prosthesis. Do not apply lotions to any open area.
4. If needed, applying an antiperspirant to the residual limb can help you control perspiration. Do not apply antiperspirant to any open area. Consult your prosthetist for antiperspirant recommendations.
5. Gentle massage and light tapping of the residual limb will help toughen the leg and prepare it for a prosthesis. You can increase pressure as the leg heals.



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1. Do not use alcohol-based products on your residual limb; they dry out the skin and can contribute to cracking or peeling.
2. Do not shave your residual limb; pressure from the prosthetic socket on "stubble" can cause the hair to grow inward, become painful, and in the worst cases, even become infected. Never use chemical hair removers on your residual limb.
3. Avoid prolonged soaking in warm bathtubs or hot tubs because this may cause increased swelling in your residual limb.

Inspection of Your Residual Limb

1. Regular inspection of your residual limb using a long-handled mirror will help you identify skin problems early.
2. Initially, inspections should be done whenever you remove your prosthesis. Later on, most amputees find daily inspection sufficient for the early identification of skin problems.
3. Inspect all areas of your residual limb. Remember to inspect the back of your residual limb, the back of your knee and all skin creases and bony areas.
4. Look for any signs of skin irritation, blisters or red marks that do not fade within 15 minutes of removing your prosthesis. Report any unusual skin problems to a member of your rehabilitation team.



For further information on skin care visit the Amputee Coalition of America online
<http://www.amputee-coalition.org/>



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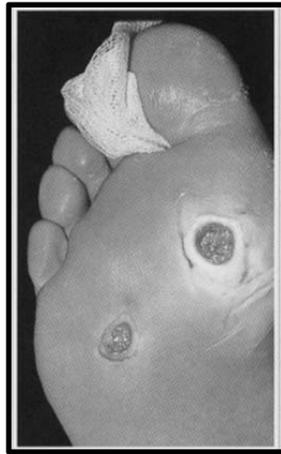
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For lower-extremity amputees, it is important to maintain the health of your sound foot. This is especially important if you have diabetes or if you have decreased circulation or sensation in your lower extremities.

Your Daily Routine Should Include the Following:



1. **Wash and dry your foot properly:** Use a mild soap, rinse thoroughly, and dry your skin by blotting or patting, making sure to dry between your toes.
2. **Inspect your foot daily:** Check for blisters, cuts and cracking, pressure areas, redness, irritation, skin breakdown, pain, or edema.
3. **Protect your foot from injury:** Wear shoes or slippers at all times, and check your shoes every time you put them on for tears, rough edges or sharp objects.
4. Contact your physician or prosthetist with any concerns.

SHRINKERS



Shrinkers are designed to help control “edema” or swelling within your residual limb by applying compression to your limb. The compression helps push the fluid within your leg away from your residual limb. Until the volume of your residual limb has stabilized, you should wear your shrinker anytime you have your prosthesis off (including at night).



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When used properly your prosthesis can help you walk and live more independently. Follow these important points to ensure your success:

- ☉ Catch any issues early, contact your prosthetist at the first sign of problems.
- ☉ Know your limb— be able to recognize when something unusual occurs (red spots, discoloration, tough skin, etc).
- ☉ While wearing the leg your skin may experience adverse effects like blisters, rashes, sores, etc. When this occurs immediately remove the prosthesis and contact your prosthetist.
- ☉ Report any malfunctions, failures or needed repairs to your prosthetist immediately.
- ☉ If there is a significant change to your health condition or weight loss or gain of more than 10lbs contact your prosthetist.
- ☉ Repairs on the prosthesis are under warranty for 3 months from the date of delivery. Individual components may have different warranties. Ask your prosthetist for details.
- ☉ Regular follow up appointments are important and should occur weekly until the adjustment period is completed and your prosthetist directs a change.

Initial Wear Schedule

Your leg needs time to adjust to wearing the prosthesis. Do not wear your prosthesis all day the first day. Unless otherwise directed by your prosthetist, follow these general wearing guidelines. Discontinue use if blistering or sores develop and contact your prosthetist.

First Week.....1-2 hours in am, 1-2 hours in pm
 Second Week.....4-8 hours a day (gradually increasing use 30 minutes a day)
 Third Week.....10-12 hours a day or as tolerable



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Be prepared! Here is a quick checklist of some things you may want to remember.

ANTIBACTERIAL CREAM— You may be walking more and, as a result, may develop sores from the increased activity. Antibacterial cream will help keep any sores clean.

DUCT TAPE— To temporarily hold together a broken strap, belt or other part of your prosthetic.

SET OF HEX WRENCHES— To tighten any bolts that may come loose (most common is 4, 5 & 6mm).

PLASTIC BAGS— To keep your prosthesis dry when there is a threat of it getting wet.

EXTRA PROSTHETIC SOCKS— Your socks have a tendency to get dirtier with hot weather and increased activity. Extra socks allow you to change them more frequently.

SPARE LINER— In case your liner gets damaged or lost.

SPARE SUCTION VALVE— In case suspension is lost or your valve is not working properly (your prosthesis may not have this - contact your prosthetist if you are unsure).

PHONE NUMBER OF YOUR PROSTHETIST— In case of an emergency and you need to contact your prosthetist.

DON'T FORGET YOUR CHARGER!! (If your prosthesis requires charging).