



Family Education Sheet



Home Care Instructions for Patients with Knee Immobilizers

A knee immobilizer is a piece of equipment that keeps the knee from bending and is typically used after a leg injury or surgical procedure (such as hamstring lengthening). It can help give your child a prolonged stretch and discourage your child from putting weight on the knee, moving the knee, or walking.

How to safely put on your child's knee immobilizer

The knee immobilizer should be put on with the stays (bars that come off) on either side of the knee. You should start by fastening the straps at the bottom and work your way up. Usually, half the brace should be above the knee and half below the knee.

Your child's knee immobilizer should fit tight, but not too tight. If it is too tight it can hurt your child's skin or restrict blood flow (circulation).

Before your child goes home from the hospital you should:

- Know how to safely put on and remove your child's knee immobilizer.
- Check your child's skin to make sure the knee immobilizer fits well.
- Review your child's restrictions with your nurse. You should know how much weight your child can bear (stand), how much your child can move his/her leg (range of motion), and how active your child can be.
- Ask your nurse any questions you have about the knee immobilizer.

When your child is home from the hospital you should:

- Remove your child's knee immobilizer every 4 hours for skin checks and sponge baths or showers. Red areas that don't go away might mean the brace is on too tight and should be loosened. If the stays are uncomfortable around the groin area, move them further down the brace and away from the groin.
- Your child's brace should be worn at all times, except during skin checks and bathing (unless you are told differently).



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Call your doctor or nurse if:

- Your child has any new skin issues. Measure the affected area and describe the skin when you call.
- The knee immobilizer causes your child pain or serious discomfort.
- The knee immobilizer 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 5:00 pm, 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
