

# **Below Knee (BK) Prosthesis**

## *Care and Use Instructions*

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### **PUTTING ON AND TAKING OFF PROSTHESIS**

1. Always put socks and sheaths on one (1) at a time, to insure no wrinkles. The sheaths go against the skin first. If you are using both cotton and wool socks, put the wool ones on first.
2. Next put on the insert and secure the suspension straps, or belt, or wedge.
3. To remove the prosthesis you should be sitting before you loosen the suspension straps, belts, or wedge. When using silicone suspension, apply pressure into the socket by pushing down with your residual limb. While putting pressure into the pin, push and hold down the release button, then pull residual limb from the socket.

### **FUNCTION OF SOCKS**

1. Act as a barrier between the skin and the prosthesis.
2. Act to absorb perspiration.
3. Act to accommodate fluctuations in limb size (less socks for swelling or weight gain and more socks for shrinkage or weight loss).

### **USE OF SOCKS (PLYS)**

1. When you feel like you are too far into the socket you may need a sock. Sometimes you may feel extra pressure on the very end of your limb, or you may feel pressure in your groin. If this occurs, you may need to add a ply of sock.
2. Should you feel that the very end of your limb is too tight in the socket, the prosthesis feels long, or the prosthesis just doesn't want to stay on, you may need to decrease a ply.



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## SOCK MANAGEMENT

1. Socks used for your prosthesis are often color coded according to the “ply” of the sock. A sock with a yellow band of color around the outside edge is a 3 ply sock, a sock with a green band is a 5 ply sock, and a one ply sock has no color band.
2. When changing plys of socks, change only one ply at a time. To adjust your fit it is recommended to use 1 ply socks, not 3 or 5 ply socks. Changing more than one ply at a time using 3 or 5 ply socks, may result in too tight of a fit. It is the total number of sock “plys”, not the number of socks that count.

***NOTE: These are suggested guidelines on how to use socks. Many factors influence the fit of a sock, such as, how old the sock is or how much it stretches when you put it on.***

## SKIN COLORING/ PRESSURE

1. When wearing your prosthesis you will expect to have pressure on your limb. The pressure should be on places where you can tolerate pressure and away from sensitive areas.
2. We want the prosthesis to fit as snug as possible to help control swelling, and to move when you move. A loose fitting prosthesis can be a problem, because it can cause friction from moving against your limb. In addition, a loose prosthesis requires more leg motion to move which takes more effort and may hinder moving it when you want to move. Excessive up and down movement inside your prosthesis can cause blistering.
3. When you remove the prosthesis after walking, do expect some pinkness over the limb. (If something was in contact with your hand for any length of time it would be pink also.) As you know, the pinkness will or should go away. If the area has darker reds and does not go away in a reasonable time then you need to check the plys of socks or contact your prosthetist immediately.

***NOTE: Weight gain or loss may possibly change the design and manufacture of the orthosis/prosthesis delivered. Please contact the practitioner if this occurs to prevent potential injury.***



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