

## About your dynamic ankle foot orthosis (DAFO)

Surgical Appliance Department  
Tel: 01271 322492

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net).

### What is a dynamic ankle foot orthosis (D.A.F.O)?

The D.A.F.O is a very thin and flexible orthosis fitting from just above the anklebones, encasing the mid-foot. It may finish behind the joints of the toes or have a full footplate.

They are very close fitting especially around the ankles and mid-foot.

There are some D.A.F.Os that have an uneven footplate; this is designed to reduce the tone (to relax tightness) of the leg and they are known as *inhibitory*.

### Why is it needed?

This type of orthosis is used for more mobile children to stabilise the foot.

### How do I fit the D.A.F.O?

1. For comfort, wear a cotton sock underneath the D.A.F.O. This needs to come up the leg so it is the same height or longer than the ankle section.
2. Ensure that the heel is positioned well into the heel cup. You can do this by holding the front of the foot with one hand, and the back of the D.A.F.O with the other hand, whilst pushing the foot gently into the splint.
3. Tighten all straps as instructed.

The D.A.F.O should be comfortable. If it isn't, then check for red areas on your foot/leg. If the red areas do not disappear within 10 minutes, then contact the Surgical Appliance/Orthotic Department on 01271 322492 for an appointment.

There will be a gradual wearing-in period similar to wearing new shoes.

## How do I look after the D.A.F.O?

### Do

- make sure all straps are in good condition.
- keep away from heat as this will affect the plastic.
- keep away from household pets.

### Do not

- force the D.A.F.O onto the foot or into the footwear.
- wash the D.A.F.O, but sponge lightly with fresh water if not lined.
- try to adjust the D.A.F.O yourself as it is specifically designed for you and if adapted it may not work.
- give the D.A.F.O to someone else to use as it could cause problems for them.

## What type of footwear should be worn?

Normal lace-up shoes or trainers are the best. You may have to get a slightly larger size than you normally buy, as the D.A.F.O will take up some room.

## Information & advice

If you have any problems or are unsure about your D.A.F.O, please contact the Surgical Appliance Officer at North Devon District Hospital on **01271 322492**.

### **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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