

HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM HANDOUT

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS - AMPUTATION

- The part of a limb remaining after amputation is called a stump. It is very important to learn to take good care of the stump. Following the general instructions below and doing only the exercises indicated by your therapist will ensure proper stump care and will allow resumption of normal activities as soon as possible.
 - When lying on your back, lie on a firm surface. Do not place pillows under the stump or between your legs. Keep your stump flat on the bed with your legs close together. If you have a below-the-knee amputation, keep your knee straight.
 - When lying on your stomach, lie on a flat surface, keeping your hips flat with your legs together. If you have a below-the-knee amputation, keep your knee straight.
 - When sitting, use a firm chair. Avoid sitting for long periods. Sit straight and distribute your weight evenly over both hips, with your legs close together. If you have a below-the-knee amputation, keep your knee straight.
 - Keep your stump clean. While the stitches are still in place, follow your physician's instructions. Once the stitches are removed, wash your stump every day, preferably just before going to bed. Use lukewarm water and mild soap, then rinse well with clean water. Do not soak your stump as it may cause swelling. Pat your stump dry with a clean towel, but don't rub. Let your skin air dry for 30 minutes before applying an ace wrap or stump shrinker. Keep your stump elevated while unwrapped.
 - Watch your stump for redness, swelling and/or irritation. Report any changes to your physician.
 - Keep your stump wrapped. Maintaining pressure on your stump with a stump shrinker or ace wrap helps shrink tissue and prevent swelling. This is very important if you will use an artificial leg or prosthesis.
 - Using a Stump Shrinker:
 - ◆ Wear a stump shrinker at all times except when bathing. Make sure the bottom of the shrinker is pulled firmly against the bottom of your stump with no wrinkles. Put on a clean stump shrinker every day. Automatic washers and dryers will ruin the elasticity of the shrinker, so handwash it using mild soap and cool water. Lay it on a flat surface to dry.
 - Using an Ace Wrap:
 - ◆ Until you get your prosthesis, wear the ace wrap at all times, except when bathing. Wear your ace wrap whenever you do not wear your prosthesis. Rewrap your stump when the wrap becomes loose or wrinkled. Put on a clean ace wrap every day. Automatic washers and dryers will ruin the elasticity of the ace wrap, so handwash it using mild soap and cool water. Lay it on a flat surface to dry. Replace the ace wrap with a new one when it is stretched out of shape.
 - ◆ Apply ace wrap evenly.
 - ◆ Ensure there are no wrinkles in the ace wrap.