

Wear and care of a Removable Rigid Dressing

The Removable Rigid Dressing is used as a postoperative dressing for the below the knee amputation. The purpose of the dressing is to control the swelling that is common following amputation surgery. The dressing acts as a protective shield to the amputation wound, yet still provides the medical attendant the ability to inspect the wound. Reapplication provides the caregiver the opportunity to increase compression to the limb as necessary. Benefits of the Removable Rigid Dressing are:

Prevention of edema. Rapid residual limb shrinkage. Possibility of frequent residual limb observations. Soft tissue immobilization to facilitate wound healing. Elimination of skin breakdown commonly seen in elastic bandaging. Simplicity of donning and doffing. Development of tolerance to weight bearing. Prevention of residual limb trauma. Reduction of wound pain



Care and Use Instructions

The RRD should be worn at all times. Avoid getting it moist or wet. You may safely remove the RRD for brief intervals (less than 15 minutes) to inspect your incision or clean your residual limb. Ask your physician how to clean your limb.

The Rigid Removable Dressing should be removed daily and the wound checked for proper healing. If you suspect infection call your physician immediately.

To reapply your Removable Rigid Dressing orient the cast by the knee cap alignment mark.

- There should be mild resistance in applying the cast.
- If the cast fits loosely, more ply of socks may be needed to increase the intimacy of the fit.
- If the cast is tight and excessive force is needed to slide the cast on, do not apply. There may be swelling caused from time out of the cast and forcing it may cause pain and damage to the limb. Decrease the number of ply socks until only mild resistance is achieved. If this is not possible and the cast remains tight, it may need to be replaced.

The RRD should fit snugly. If you can turn or rotate it freely, if it slides on and off without effort, the RRD is too loose. If the RRD feels constricting, if you notice indentation along the upper border or red patches anywhere when you take it off, the RRD is too tight. As your residual limb heals, it shrinks in size. You will be discharged with several different prosthetic socks of varying thickness. As your residual limb shrinks, layer the socks on your residual limb so that when you put the RRD on, it fits snugly. This means you will need to add socks as your stump heals and becomes smaller to maintain the proper fit. You can wear more than one sock at a time.

Follow the manufacturer's directions to clean the socks. Most recommend hand or machine wash on low settings with a mild soap. Machine dry on low or hang dry.

People with leg amputations tend to hold their leg with the knee bent. Never sit or sleep with a pillow under your knee, as this will lead to a contracture (inability to straighten the knee.) Do stretching exercises daily to make sure that you can straighten your knee; this makes walking, and lying in bed, more comfortable. Also continue doing the exercises you learned in physical therapy. If you keep up with the exercises, you should quickly progress when it comes time to learn to walk with your artificial leg (prosthesis).

The physician who did the amputation will continue to follow you. Do not hesitate to contact them if you have questions.

In the near future, Coyote Prosthetics and Orthotics will contact you. All emergencies should be evaluated and treated by the Emergency Department. Should you have any questions about the Removable Rigid Dressing do not hesitate to contact your Prosthetist at Coyote Prosthetics and Orthotics.

Signature

Date