



## Together with youths and their families



# Life with a prosthesis

*This brochure is for young amputees and their families.*

### Contacts:

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Ext: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_

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Prosthetist: \_\_\_\_\_

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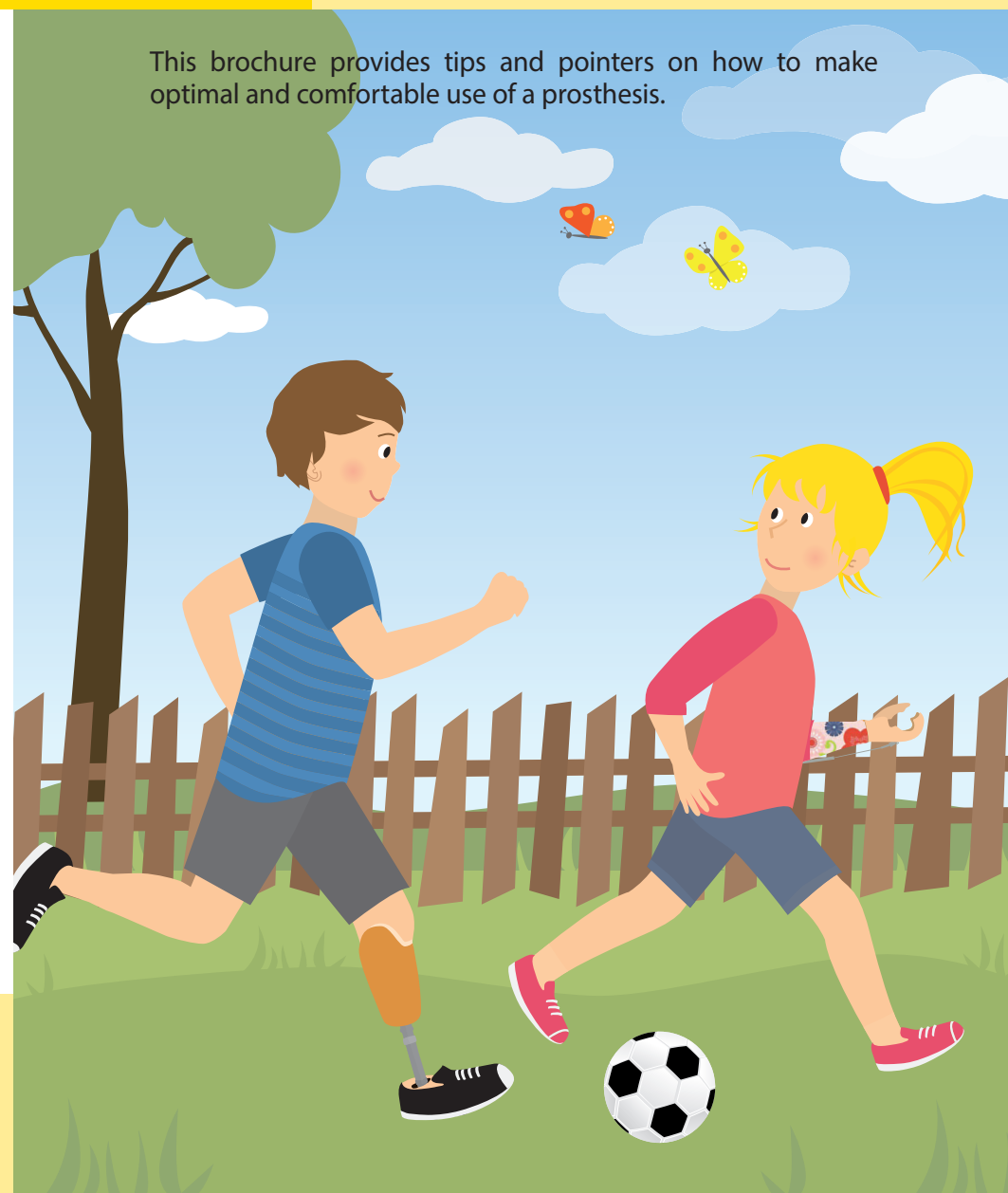
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This brochure provides tips and pointers on how to make optimal and comfortable use of a prosthesis.





## Skin hygiene

The skin of the residual limb (stump) must be kept clean to prevent pain, discomfort and skin problems. Sweating is one of the most common skin irritants, so it's important to keep the stump clean.

- Wash the stump daily with mild soap. Rinse and dry thoroughly.
- Wash the stump in the evening if you can because any moisture on the skin can cause irritation when the prosthesis is in use. If you must wash the stump during the day, make sure it's completely dry before putting the prosthesis back on.
- Wash the stump after sports or sustained exercise.
- Use fragrance-free cream to moisturize the skin. Cream should be applied before a long break from wearing the prosthesis (e.g., in the evening or at night).



## Caution

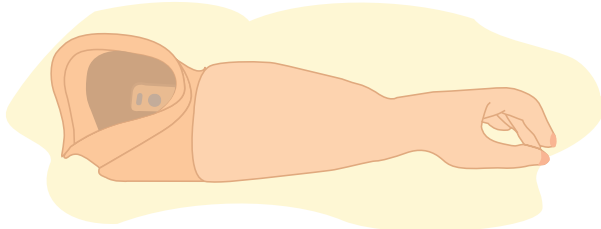
- Never completely immerse the prosthesis in water unless it's a swimming prosthesis.
- Never use the prosthesis in situations where you wouldn't use your arm or your leg. If you think you might get hurt, your prosthesis could probably be damaged as well!
- If the prosthesis breaks, don't try to fix it yourself. Contact the prosthetist.





## Cosmetic glove care

- Wash the glove daily with a damp cloth and mild soap.
- Clean stains right away (the longer you wait, the harder it is to get them out).
- The following products can help remove stains (rinse thoroughly after use):
  - Rubbing alcohol
  - Household cleaner (e.g., Hertel®, Fantastic®)
  - Hair spray
  - Product recommended by the manufacturer (ask the prosthetist)



- If the glove has any small holes, use clear tape to prevent further tearing until the glove can be fixed.
- Watch out for things that stain:
  - Ballpoint pens, felt-tip pens and pencils
  - Newspapers
  - Mustard and ketchup
  - Carrots and beets
  - Spices like curry and turmeric
  - Grease
  - Dark fabrics



## What to watch out for

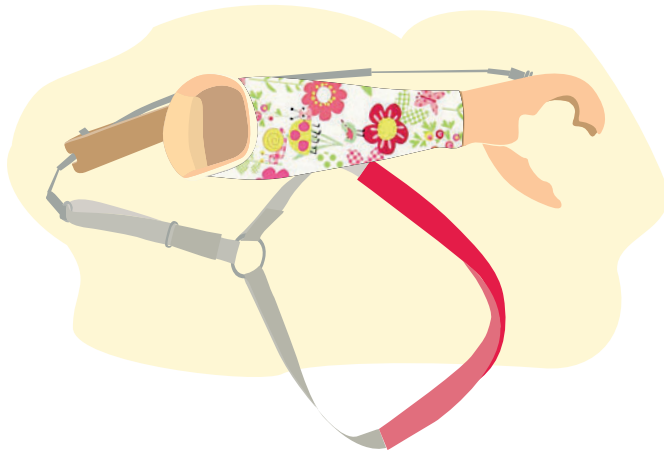
- Always check the stump when removing the prosthesis. There may be some redness, but it should go away within 20 minutes. If it doesn't, the prosthesis is putting too much pressure on that area. You should contact the prosthetist.
- Any blisters or abrasions should be treated right away:
  1. Clean and pat dry.
  2. Apply a thin hydrocolloid dressing (available in pharmacies) and leave it on for 72 hours.The prosthesis can still be worn. If the situation persists, contact the prosthetist.
- If the skin becomes irritated and it itches or burns, or if a furuncle (boil) or an abscess (sign of infection) forms, you should contact your doctor or prosthetist.



## Prosthesis care

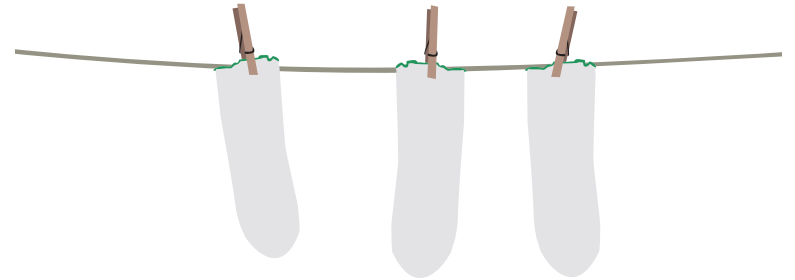
To avoid unpleasant odours and to help maintain healthy skin, it's important to wash the prosthesis daily.

- The prosthesis or its inner liner should be washed daily:
  1. Use a damp cloth and mild, unscented soap to scrub the inside of the prosthesis.
  2. Rinse with a damp cloth and no soap.
  3. Dry thoroughly with a dry cloth.
- It's always best to clean the prosthesis in the evening so it's completely dry when it's time to use it again.
- Don't fully immerse the prosthesis in water when cleaning it.
- A cloth dampened with rubbing alcohol can be used to remove lingering odours.



## Stump sock care

- Wash the sock daily. It can be machine-washed or hand-washed with a mild, unscented soap.
- Lay out the sock to dry.
- Change the sock daily or more than once a day in case of heavy sweating.
- Don't use fabric softener, stain remover or bleach.



## Silicone or gel liner care

- Wash the liner by hand every day:
  1. Remove the liner by turning it inside out and wash it.
  2. Use warm water and an antibacterial, unscented soap.
  3. Rinse thoroughly with clean water.
  4. Wipe both sides with a soft, lint-free cloth.
- Wash the liner in the evening so it's completely dry when it's time to use it again.
- Don't use fabric softener, stain remover or bleach.