



ORTHOSIS PROCUREMENT, MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING

by PT SIT Team

Procurement Considerations:

To determine need

1. Evaluate and determine the functional need for an orthotic. Will an orthotic help optimize the students function at school? Do you anticipate the orthotic will assist in achieving safety and/or functional goals related to school participation?
2. Consult the parent or guardian to discuss the functional need for an orthotic. Suggest a visit to the student’s primary care doctor to obtain a prescription and their recommendation for an “orthotic clinic.”
3. Consider providing a copy of your observations in school to the parent/physician that show possible need for an orthotic, or write a note discussing the desired functional outcomes.

To obtain an orthotic

1. After completing the above, then the physician refer the student for an evaluation by an orthotist.
2. Efforts should always be made to keep all appointments at the clinic, for a specific situation where assessment in the school is warranted, permission from school principal is needed.
3. An orthotic is a piece adaptive equipment that will be used by the student not just in the school environment, but also at home and in the community. Therefore, it is not an IEP-driven equipment, and must be processed through the child’s health insurance.
4. Please note that writing letters of justification for health insurance companies is beyond the scope of NYC DOE school-based therapists. Although input can come from school OTs/PTs, the final letter should be written by the orthotist based on their findings and recommendations.
5. Work closely with the orthotist. Discuss the student’s current function in the school, and the desired outcomes/goals for the student. If necessary, school therapist may attend orthotic clinic with permission from their on-site administrator and clinical supervisor.
6. Typical procurement proceeds as below:
 - Orthotist takes a mold and sends it out for fabrication of the orthotic.
 - Custom-made orthotics are returned to the clinic for fitting, assessment and possible adjustments.
 - Child returns to the clinic for a final fitting.
 - Child is ready to begin wearing the orthotic as per the orthotist’s recommended wearing schedule.

Maintenance and Monitoring:

Daily	Monitor the student’s tolerance to use of the orthotic by checking skin for redness or any sign of irritation. Redness should not be present or fade in less than one hour after taking AFO off. Knee high socks and wide shoe are recommended.
Weekly	Assess improvement in school related functional tasks. AFO can be washed with soap and water, rubbing alcohol can also be used to kill bacteria. Make sure AFO is completely dry before wearing again.
Monthly	As above. Follow up with orthotist periodically with any issues that arise (broken Velcro strap, red pressure spots that are not fading after use, or are worsening).