

## Walker Boot / Shoe Advice

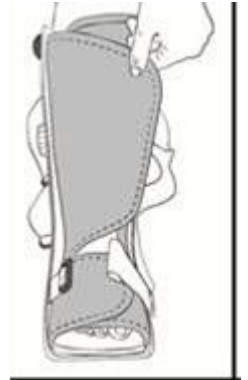
### Why have I been given a walking boot or shoe?

You have been diagnosed with either a stable minor fracture (broken bone) of your ankle/ foot or a severe ankle sprain and the walking boot/shoe will provide your ankle/foot with support whilst your injury heals. They can be effective in helping with the healing of your fracture as well as the management of your swelling (oedema).

The clinician who saw you will have checked that you have sensation in your foot. The boot/shoe should not be used if you cannot feel sensation (whether due to nerve, skin, or other medical conditions) unless you were told to do so by the clinician.

### How do I put the walking boot on?

- Whilst sitting put your heel firmly to the back of the boot.
- Wrap the material around the foot then the leg – it should be snug but not too tight.
- Replace the plastic guard before tightening up the straps.
- To inflate the air bags remove the plastic covers, and pump the blue bulbs until you feel the airbags against your ankle/foot. It is best to do these together to get even pressure either side of your ankle.
- The airbags in the walking boot allow firmness around your ankle and foot. **It is important not to over-inflate the airbags** as this may cause skin irritation.
- Higher pressure provides more support when walking. Lower pressure is more comfortable when sitting or reclining. Pressure can also be adjusted by tightening or loosening the straps.



You should not feel any numbness or tingling in your toes – if you do you will need to let a little air out.

### How do I put the walking shoe on?

Make sure you put your heel firmly to the back of the shoe, then wrap the material around and tighten the strap over your foot and then around your ankle. They should be snug but not too tight.



### Cleaning your boot

To freshen up the inside of your boot, spray it lightly inside with an odour-eliminating product and then allow it to air dry. Do not do this if you have an open wound as it may irritate your healing skin. The plastic can be wiped over with a damp cloth. The liner can be washed with mild detergent and water at 30°C and air dried.

Things you should do	Things you should not do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep your ankle/leg raised (elevated) with your foot higher than your bottom, as much as possible (at least 2 - 3 hours) each day to help prevent/reduce the swelling and bruising;</li> <li>• Use ice packs (frozen peas wrapped in a towel will do), for 15-20 minutes every 2 - 3 hours;</li> <li>• Use a sock whilst using the boot/shoe to help absorb any sweat and reduce smells. Make sure that the sock does not wrinkle inside the boot as this could cause sores.</li> <li>• Always wear your boot/shoe any time you are on your feet.</li> <li>• Remove the boot/shoe and wash and dry your leg/foot every day and check to make sure your skin is not becoming red or broken;</li> <li>• Take care when walking in your boot/shoe especially when you see uneven or wet surfaces, as it has a “rocker” bottom;</li> <li>• Remove the boot/shoe before bed – unless you have been told not to</li> <li>• Always use crutches when walking to provide stability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use ice packs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ over areas of skin that are in poor condition</li> <li>○ If you have poor sensation to cold</li> <li>○ If you know you have poor circulation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Place ice packs directly onto your skin as they can burn.</li> <li>• Leave ice packs on while asleep.</li> <li>• Do not soak your injured leg in a hot bath – this will make it swell.</li> </ul>

## When to get help

You should go to see your **GP** if you notice that the skin on your injured leg is painful, irritated, red or broken

You should return to the **ED/MIU** department if a part of your boot appears to be broken or damaged.

<b>If you are told</b>	<b>This means that</b>
<b>You can fully weight bear whilst in the boot/shoe:</b>	You can put your full weight on the floor whilst in the boot. You are not to put your foot on the floor at any point without your boot on, unless instructed to do so by your doctor or physiotherapist.
<b>Not to put any weight on your limb:</b>	You should not stand on the floor, either to walk on or to assist walking. You will need to use the crutches / frame to support you. If you have been asked to take the boot off at night, please have your crutches / frame available by your bedside so that you do not accidentally put weight on your foot.
<b>Partially weight bear whilst in the boot:</b>	You can put some weight on the affected foot. This usually means taking most of your weight on your crutches /frame and using your injured limb as pain allows.
<b>To wear the boot at night:</b>	<b>That the boot has to remain on all the time, including in bed.</b> Release some of the air in the boot to a comfortable level, making sure there is no pressure on the limb. If you have been told that you can fully weight bear throughout the day, an old pillow case could be used to cover the boot at night to maintain hygiene and stop your bedding from getting dirty.
<b>You can take the boot off at night:</b>	You will either need to put the boot back on or use your crutches / frame to get to the toilet. <b>Do not</b> put your weight on the floor as this may cause damage to your limb.
<b>You can take the boot off to wash:</b>	You should not stand without the support of the boot at any time as this could cause further injury to the limb. Standing in a bath or shower is not recommended. Alternative arrangements have to be found, for example, sitting on a chair or seat in the shower is OK, providing no weight is put on your foot. Do not get the boot wet. A boot can be removed to wash, check on the limb for soreness, and pressure relief.

**If you have a broken bone you will normally be followed up by Trauma and Orthopaedics in their Fracture Clinic.**

**However, if you are concerned about your progress, or if you have not improved within 10 days, we advise you to contact your GP or return to the Emergency Department/MIU department where you were seen.**

**If you are at all concerned about your injury please contact the relevant Emergency Department/Minor Injury Unit (MIU):**

**Royal Gwent Hospital: 01633 234056**

**Nevill Hall Hospital: 01873 732073**

**Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (YYF) 01443 802353 or 802349**

**Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan (YAB) MIU: 01495 363318**

**“This document is available in Welsh / Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**