

**head to foot orthotics**

## Minerva Orthosis



This brochure is intended as a source of information for patients, their family and friends. Questions are welcome, so please contact your Orthotist on the contact number provided.

### What is a Minerva Orthosis for?

A Minerva Orthosis is fitted to provide stability to the cervical spine (neck) following a fracture, dislocation or ligament damage.

*Orthosis* is another name for an orthopaedic support.

### When to Wear

An Orthotist will fit the Minerva Orthosis in consultation with medical specialists and it will remain in place for up to 12 weeks. Generally the Minerva must remain on 24 hours per day / 7 days per week (it cannot be removed).

Review appointments will be made with both the medical specialist and the Orthotist during the period that you are wearing the Minerva. These appointments may be able to be co-ordinated to be on the same day.

Once discharged from hospital your Orthotist can be used as your point of contact for information and services related to the Minerva Orthosis.

### Removal

The medical specialist will advise when the Minerva Orthosis should be removed. You may be required to wear a small neck collar (e.g. Philadelphia collar) after it is removed.

## Showers

Minerva Orthosis showers can be organised with your Orthotist where necessary and approved by the medical specialist. If you would like to arrange a shower please contact your Orthotist.

### Shower Checklist (things to bring with you)

- Toiletries
- Spare liners
- Philadelphia Collar (if you have one)
- Change of clothes
- Towel

## Hygiene while at home

Once at home you can sponge bath without getting moisture under the Minerva Orthosis vest. Do not use talcum powder or substitute powders underneath your vest.

Haircuts are possible while in a Minerva Orthosis.

## Clothing

Larger clothing is required to accommodate the Minerva Orthosis. Button or zip up shirts and jumpers are the most effective clothing. Existing clothing including T-shirts and pullover's can be modified to fit. Your Orthotist can advise you of techniques to achieve this.

Sensible shoes with non-slip soles are advised to increase your safety.

## Activities

- When standing from sitting position it is dangerous to have someone use the Minerva Orthosis to help lift you.
- When sitting try to have your backside as close to the back of the chair as possible. Slouching can lead to pressure problems around the vest. Try not to position yourself in a way that flexes the plastic vest.
- When lying in bed try not to bend more than 30 degrees at your hips.
- Sexual activities do not have to be avoided but may need to be modified.
- You must not drive and when you are a passenger it is best to sit in a seat with a high back or headrest.
- A small rolled up towel placed in the curve of your neck helps with the comfort of sleeping for some people.

Your Physiotherapist will provide you with advice regarding the amount and intensity of activities and exercises that are appropriate for you.

## Wearing Problems

It is important to be aware of the following signs and report them immediately to your Orthotist:

- Increased pain
- Reddened skin around any part of the Minerva Orthosis.
- If any part of the Orthosis breaks
- Increasing headaches

**Never underestimate the importance of the Minerva orthosis. If you are unsure about your Minerva Orthosis and feel there is a problem do one of the following:**

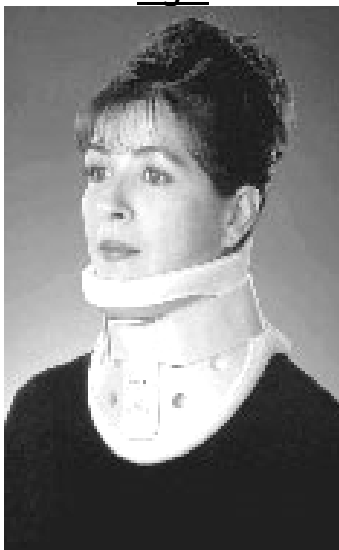
- Contact your Orthotist.
- Make your way to the closest Emergency department.
- Contact an ambulance and lie on your back until it arrives.

### Emergencies

Before leaving the hospital you may have been provided with a Philadelphia collar (see Fig 1 below). Try to have the collar near you at all times and bring it to any appointments you have at the hospital.

**Only an Orthotist or medical staff may alter the Minerva Orthosis unless there is an emergency.**

**Fig 1**



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### Further Details

Please contact if you have questions or require an appointment.



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