How to put on your above knee prosthesis

Rigid pelvic band

Information for patients
Prosthetics
This leaflet describes how to put on (don) and take off (doff) your artificial limb

When you first take delivery of your artificial limb, your prosthetist and physiotherapist will show you the correct way to put it on and take it off. You should not put the limb on until you have been shown how to do this correctly and you are confident that you know what to do.

The rigid pelvic band attached to the side of the socket is used to provide the maximum amount of support and suspension for the artificial limb. These are most commonly used when the stump (residual limb) is very short. You may hear it referred to as an RPB. The leather belt that covers the pelvic band passes around the waist to hold the artificial limb on.

A stump sock should be worn next to the skin between your stump and the socket. Stump socks come in different thicknesses depending on the material. These include wool, terry towelling, cotton or nylon. Use a clean sock every day and remember that your stump may change in size and shape, which could mean that you have to add or take off socks during the day to help the artificial limb fit more comfortably.

There is a separate leaflet called 'Stump socks' which explains this further. Ask your prosthetist if you would like a copy.
1) Sit on the edge of a firm bed. Pull on or roll your sock(s) onto your stump making sure there are no wrinkles. The seam should be away from your scar. If you are going to wear trousers, place the artificial limb down the empty trouser leg on the amputated side only. Take care you don’t trip on the loose garment.

2) Bend the prosthetic knee and angle the prosthetic foot slightly outwards. If you have a locked knee, unlock it first by pushing down on the lever at the side of the socket with your thumb.

Note: Some knees require some pressure to be placed on the toe for the lock to operate correctly. Your prosthettist and physiotherapist will let you know if your knee needs pressure placing on the toe.
3) With the foot still slightly turned out, slide your stump (residual limb) into the socket.

4) Bring the leather belt around your body and fasten the buckle at the front.
5) Fold the stump sock(s) over the rim of the socket as shown. This prevents the sock from rolling down and improves the comfort.

6) If you have been given a shoulder strap, pass it over the opposite shoulder and fasten it to the stud at the front of the pelvic band before putting on a shirt or blouse.
7) Sit on the edge of the bed with your prosthetic foot slightly in front. Stand up by pushing up from the bed using your hands. Reach for your walking frame if you have one and stand up straight, pushing your stump back to straighten the knee joint.

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8) If you have an artificial limb with a locked knee, this will lock automatically and you will usually hear a 'click'. Before you set off walking, do check that the knee is locked correctly.

9) Look down at the artificial foot and check that it is still pointing slightly out. If not, sit back down and adjust the belt and shoulder strap or reposition your stump in the socket. At this point, if you are going to wear trousers, insert your own leg into the second trouser leg, pull up and fasten. You are now ready to walk.
How to take the limb off

1. Always sit down to take the artificial limb off after use.

2. If you have a locked knee, place your artificial foot behind your remaining foot and unlock the knee by pressing down on the lever, push your stump gently forward to bend the knee.

3. Reach down and back with one hand and then the other until you touch the bed or chair and slowly lower yourself down into a sitting position.

4. Undo the buckle and (if you have one) the shoulder strap at the front only. Pull your stump out of the socket and take the stump sock off.

5. Check your stump for any sore or red areas after each use. There is another leaflet called 'Care of your stump' which explains this further. Please ask your prosthetist if you would like a copy. If soreness persists, do make an appointment with your prosthetist to have the artificial limb checked over or adjusted.

Please note: For hygiene reasons and for your own dignity and that of others around you, we request that you always attend your appointments wearing modest undergarments. This means briefs or boxer shorts for gentlemen and full briefs (no thongs) for ladies.
If you have any questions on how to wear your artificial limb or if any aspect of this leaflet is unclear, please speak to your physiotherapist in the first instance.

Otherwise you can telephone the M&SRC for advice on:

0114 271 5566

or ask the receptionist for an appointment to discuss it with your prosthetist.