

# VertaLux® Patient's Instructions for Use

The following are general guidelines for wearing and caring for the VertaLux® spinal brace. Your healthcare provider may alter, supersede, or even oppose some of them. He or she knows your medical status and is using the VertaLux as one part of your total care. It is important to follow his or her instructions exactly, even if they differ from some of the following guidelines.



## Getting Acquainted with Your New VertaLux® Spinal Brace

Your orthotist will have chosen and assembled the proper components when he or she fit you with your VertaLux brace. Your task is comparatively easy. You merely need to loosen straps and remove one hook and loop panel to take the brace off. Then, reattach that panel and re-tighten those straps to reapply the brace.

### Putting the VertaLux on

1. Loosen the straps on the front of the brace, if they are not already loosened. (They should have been loosened when you last took the brace off, so you can normally ignore this step.)
2. Position the brace so that the back is centered on your spine and so that the lumbar curve of the back piece matches the curve of your spine. (This sounds complicated, but it just means to place the back of the brace in its natural - and most comfortable - position on your back.)
3. Fasten the right-side strap panel by holding the front of the brace in your left hand and the right strap panel in your right hand and pressing the hook of the strap panel onto the loop of the front brace panel.
4. Tighten the straps, bringing opposing straps together simultaneously. If you have a brace with only one strap per side (a "low-profile" front), you just do this once. If you have two straps per side (a standard or mid-profile front), pull one set snug but not tight, then tighten the second set, then return to the first set and tighten it.
5. Verify brace orientation by making sure that the back of the brace is centered on your spine - usually the front black pocket will be centered as well - and that the brace is the correct vertical height on your body (by making sure the curve of the small of your back is accurately "spooned" by the brace's back).
6. If your VertaLux has a chest plate (Extender) with shoulder straps, you can either put the brace on like a shirt, slipping your arms through the straps, or, if that is too difficult for you, you may release the buckle on one of the straps before you take the VertaLux off, then re-tighten the strap after putting it back on.

### Taking the VertaLux off

1. Loosen the straps in the front of the brace, placing the hook onto the side strap assemblies but not on the front fabric component.
2. Unfasten the right strap panel by holding the front of the brace in your left hand and the right strap panel's loop in your right hand and pulling the hook of the strap panel from the loop of the front brace panel.

3. Lay the brace down in a safe place. Take care that the hook of the brace straps does not come in contact with knit fabrics, which it could fasten itself to and damage.

### **Wear a soft under-sleeve**

We recommend wearing a cotton t-shirt or similar garment under the brace. There is nothing wrong with wearing the brace directly on the skin except that you will have to wash the brace much more often. It's better to throw a t-shirt in the wash daily and keep the brace clean as long as possible.

### **Tip**

If putting the VertaLux brace on is difficult for you, an easier method might be to lay the brace flat on the bed with the inside facing up, then lie down on top of it in the correct position. It will be easier to fasten the front this way for two reasons: 1) You don't have to hold the brace in place against gravity, and 2) the position of lying supine (on your back, facing up) allows gravity to pull your soft tissue inward, thus easing the pressure resisting the tensioning of the straps.

### **Caution**

After you take the VertaLux orthosis off, always make sure that the hook (the part that is rough to the touch) is covered so that it cannot come into contact with delicates or knit fabrics, which it could damage.

Be sure to fasten the black hook to the black loop. Try not to not fasten the black hook to the black fabric. This hook and loop fabric is indeed "hook compatible," but it is not as aggressive in its adhesion to the loop.

### **Care**

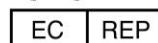
Remove the front and side polymer (plastic) inserts from the pockets. Hand wash the black (or blue) padding with mild soap and cool water. Dry flat between bath towels. Dry the padding thoroughly before putting it back on the brace. (Note: If you need to wear the brace before it will dry, you should obtain an extra set of the black (or blue) padding and alternate your two sets of padding with each cleaning. Wipe the polymer (plastic/foam) sections with a damp cloth, using a mild soap solution.

Before you remove the polymer inserts from their pockets, take care to mark them so you can return them exactly as they were. Replacing them in-side out or up-side down will destroy the careful fit your healthcare provider has created. If you do not remember how the polymer inserts were, look for the label. Each polymer insert normally has a small label placed in the inside (toward the body), centered near the top end. In the event an insert has lost its label, here are some tips: 1) The front insert is flat on top and curved on the bottom. 2) As to inside/outside, simply match the curve with the shape of the body. 3) Each lateral insert's curve is in the upper half and toward the body.



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