

## **Post-Polio Bracing** By [Marny K. Eulberg, MD](#)

### **Questions To Ask The Orthotist (Bracemaker)**

1. What problem is the brace going to address? Drop foot? A knee that is unstable, or buckles (collapses forward)? A deformity of foot, ankle, knee? a painful joint?  
Or a combination of the above?
2. What are the credentials/qualifications of the brace maker?
3. Ask questions and get answers to YOUR satisfaction and level of understanding -  
Examples:  
“Explain to me how this brace will address/solve my particular problem(s)”  
“Show me what it will look like”  
“Can I try an off-the-shelf model or a sample so I can experience what it will be like to wear?”  
“If it will be on the leg I use for driving (or other important activity - depress pedals on a piano, etc) how will it impact my ability to do those activities?”  
“What choices of a brace do I have?”  
“What are the pros and cons of each of these brace designs?”  
“What kind of footwear can I wear with this brace?”  
“Will I need a different size than I am currently wearing?”  
“Can I wear it without shoes?” (personal preference or cultural/religious requirement in certain situations)
4. What about the care of the brace?  
Can it be worn in the water?  
If there are joints, do they need to be oiled? If so, what kind of oil should I use?  
Are there springs/joints/screws that might break or fall out? If so, can I get spare parts to have on hand and be taught how to do my own repairs?  
How do I recognize a problem or impending problem with the brace? And what do I do if I suspect a problem?
5. Will gait training be recommended as part of the program? If so, who should do the gait training, what does it entail, etc?
6. How much will the brace cost? How much is my insurance likely to cover? How much will I have to pay out of pocket?
7. Are there any warranties or guarantees?
8. What kind of follow-up is recommended? (Note: most braces DO require some adjustments initially and over time)

Finally, technology is changing and your body may also change, especially if you have post-polio syndrome, so it is a good idea to check in with an orthotist at least once every 3-5 years.

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