

# PREMIER OA BRACING Patient Instructions

## Fitting Instructions



Tighten the Synergistic Suspension Strap while maintaining the hinges in the appropriate position. The strap should fit in the flexion fold behind your knee.

1



Tighten the front shin strap. Make sure the hinges remain at knee center and not too far forward or back on the side of your knee. NOTE: Following the initial application, the front shin strap does not have to be undone each time you put on or take off the brace. Also, braces made with a double band tibia shell do not have this strap.

2



Tighten the bottom strap to secure the lower shell of the brace to your leg.

3

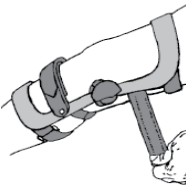


Next, tighten the two thigh straps on the upper portion of the brace.

4

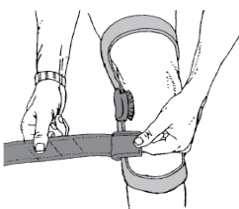


5



Straighten your leg and re-tighten the lower thigh strap. Finally, stand and check to see the brace is properly positioned at knee center and the straps are all securely in place.

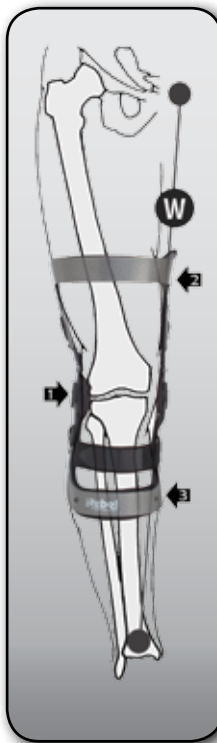
6



**Shortening Straps & Pads** The straps on your brace can be cut to any length. During your initial fitting, you may need to trim any strap that is too long. Simply remove the Velcro hook tab at the end of the strap, cut the strap to the desired length, and reposition the hook tab. Be careful not to cut any strap too short. Additionally, any comfort pads attached to the inside of the straps must be lifted off and cut shorter if they interfere with your ability to completely tighten the strap.

7

The medical professional providing your brace will supervise your initial fitting and show you how to put on the brace. Please refer to these illustrations and instructions to help ensure you are putting your brace on properly.



## How The Premier Reliever Works

Osteoarthritis alters the natural characteristics of the knee joint. This generally occurs as part of the aging process or as the result of an earlier knee injury or knee surgery. OA causes degeneration of the articular cartilage and tissues which provide a natural cushion between the bones in the knee. Patients with OA will often have abnormal angulation of the leg -- medial OA causes the knee to bow out and lateral OA causes the knee to bow in. When you stand or walk and all of your weight is on your affected leg, your body weight is concentrated on the damaged side of the knee. This bone-on-bone contact can cause swelling, pain and other symptoms during and after routine physical activity. The Premier Reliever is custom fabricated with rigid graphite shells. The brace is designed to provide a three point pressure system (see picture, left). The corrective force applied to the leg is intended to maintain normal alignment (reduce abnormal angulation) and redistribute weight away from the damaged side of your knee. Relieving the load and maintaining a more neutral alignment of the leg generally relieves knee pain and reduces degeneration of the joint.

## Patient Benefits

There are two primary benefits to be achieved from wearing your Townsend Premier Reliever. First, you should experience a reduction in pain. This should enable you to participate more freely in normal physical activities. Second, your brace should help slow down the continued degeneration of bones and tissues in your knee joint.

## Recommendations

Carefully follow your physician's instructions regarding physical activities. Be careful, especially initially, not to overdo things. It may take several weeks to feel comfortable with the brace on your leg. We recommend that you initially wear the brace for only a few hours a day. Some patients feel immediate pain relief. For others, it can take several weeks to notice measurable benefits. You may experience mild aching in your knee joint as your leg muscles and ligamentous tissues stretch to allow the joint to open. **If you experience severe pain that is hard to tolerate, develop any skin irritation from the straps or pads, experience any loss of circulation (tingling or numbness), stop wearing your brace until you can see the medical care professional directing your care.**

## Adjusting Correction

During your initial fitting, the medical professional will make any necessary adjustments to the base level of correction that was built into your brace. If you need additional correction in the future, we recommend that you revisit the medical professional who fit your brace. You should only make your own adjustments to the corrective force if the medical professional in charge of your care has instructed you to do so. Too much correction can cause potential injury to your knee, and Townsend Design cannot be held responsible for problems or injuries resulting from any unsupervised adjustments you make.

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## **Brace Care and Maintenance**

**Hinges** -- The hinges on your brace are pre-lubricated. If sand, dirt or water get inside the hinges, they may require periodic lubrication. If you notice the hinges not gliding smoothly, a few drops of a synthetic lubricant can be applied. You can purchase this type of lubricant at a hardware store.

**Straps** -- The straps on your brace are nonelastic for maximum control. After considerable use, if the fibers on your strap do not adhere as well to the Velcro "hook" tab, if possible, cut the strap shorter so the Velcro hook tab adheres to a section of the strap that has fresher fibers. Otherwise the straps may need to be replaced.

**Pads** -- Your brace is lined with padding that provides a comfortable interface between your leg and the shells. Certain straps may also have pads. Do not remove the pads from the brace or straps. Wipe the pads after each use to remove any moisture and let the pads air dry. You can also clean the pads with a mild anti-bacteria soap and rinse them off with fresh water. DO NOT wash pads in a machine or dry them with a blow dryer.

## **Parts and Service**

Comfort pads, condylar pads, hinge covers, straps and other parts on your brace may need to be repaired or replaced due to normal wear and tear. If your brace requires repairs or replacement parts, you should contact the professional who assisted you in ordering and fitting your brace. Certain parts are covered by a limited warranty.

## **Undersleeves & Protective Covers**

This brace is designed to be worn directly against the skin. Neoprene or cotton undersleeves may be ordered if you prefer to wear a sleeve under your brace. Wearing an undersleeve may enhance comfort, however, a sleeve can potentially cause the brace to slip down your leg. If you intend to wear your brace for high intensity sports (football, soccer, baseball, etc.) Or activities that may expose the brace to objects that could damage the painted shells, we strongly recommend that you speak with the medical professional who fit your brace about ordering a protective cover. A cover is also often required for team sports.

## **Warranty**

Under normal use and conditions, the shells and hinges on your brace are covered by a lifetime warranty against defects in craftsmanship and breaking. Straps, hinge covers, comfort pads and other replaceable parts are backed by a six month warranty. Free remolding service (to make fitting adjustments to your brace) is also provided for six months from the date of purchase. If you experience a problem, please call the medical provider that supplied you with the brace.

## **PRODUCT DISCLAIMER**

This OA brace is a prescription product that should be used in accordance with the directives of your physician as part of a treatment plan for managing your total health. While this type of OA brace has proven beneficial to many patients with unicompartement osteoarthritis, outcomes will vary based on factors including patient age, general health, severity of OA, and/or lack of compliance with instructions for how to put on and use the product. Townsend Design is a manufacturer, not a provider of patient care services. Townsend Design fabricated your brace based on the information provided to our company by the medical professional treating your condition. Since Townsend Design was not involved in your assessment, fitting or education, we cannot make specific guarantees this product will reduce your knee pain or joint degeneration. Because of variations in the health and condition of each patient, Townsend Design also does not make any specific recommendations regarding appropriate activities for the user of this brace. Additionally, while a Townsend OA brace may aid in decreasing the risk or degree of injury to the leg for which it is fabricated, Townsend Design cannot and does not guarantee that the brace will prevent injuries -- especially as the intensity of physical activity increases. Contact and high velocity sports are inherently dangerous and create a higher risk for injury. If you experience any skin reactions, loss of circulation, unusual knee pain or any other complication you think may be associated with the use of this product, stop wearing the brace and call the medical professional who prescribed and/or fit your brace.