

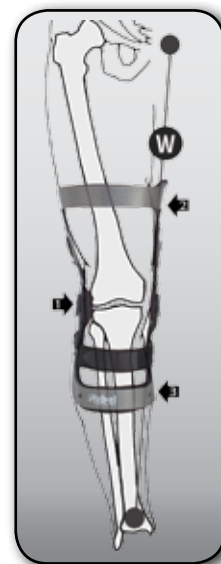
REBEL RELIEVER OA Patient Instructions

The medical professional who performs the initial fitting of your brace should make any necessary adjustments to the fit of the shells, the corrective force applied by the brace, the condylar pads, and the length of the straps. The fitter should also walk you through the steps you will need to follow each time you put on your brace. While the process is relatively easy, you are encouraged to refer to the instructions below to ensure you are putting the brace on correctly.

HOW THE REBEL RELIEVER WORKS

Osteoarthritis deteriorates tissues that function as a cushion between the bony surfaces in the knee joint. This generally occurs as part of the aging process or as the result of an earlier injury or surgery. Many patients with OA also develop abnormal leg alignment. OA on the medial side generally causes the knee to bow out and lateral OA causes the knee to bow in. The loss of tissue between the bones, and the affect of leg misalignment, can cause the body's weight to be "loaded" on the damaged side of the knee. With every step, the body's weight is concentrated on a small aspect of the knee joint that is bone-on-bone. This causes pain, inflammation and other symptoms during and after routine physical activities.

The Rebel Reliever is designed to accomplish two primary goals. First, the rigid superstructure of the brace will help maintain the leg in a normal (also called neutral) alignment. Second, the brace applies corrective forces by means of a three-point pressure system. These corrective forces help distribute load away from the damaged compartment. The amount of corrective force can be increased as needed by making adjustments to the angle of the thigh shell. By applying more force, the three-point pressure is amplified which redistributes weight through both sides of the knee and the shells of the brace. Relieving the load on the damaged side of the knee generally relieves pain and reduces degeneration of the joint. While the Rebel Reliever can't cure OA, the benefits of wearing the brace will generally allows you to increase your physical activities and delay the need for knee surgery.



FITTING INSTRUCTIONS

Step One: Sit on the edge of a chair and bend your leg slightly (about 30 to 45 degrees of flexion).

Step Two: Unfasten the four straps on the brace and slide the brace onto your leg.

Step Three: Position the brace on the leg so that the oval shaped pads that are attached to the inside of the hinges press against both sides of your knee. The middle of the pads should line up with the center to upper third of your knee cap, and should also be centered on the side of your leg. (See illustration 1 in the box at the bottom of the page.)

Step Four: Tighten the Synergistic Suspension Strap, which is the most important strap for preventing the brace from slipping down your leg. You will tighten this strap in the flexion fold behind your knee, on top of the natural shelf formed by your calf muscle. (See illustration 3 in box at the bottom of the page.) The strap must be tight, but not so tight as to cut off circulation and/or cause discomfort. There is a rubber pad attached to the Synergistic Suspension Strap. This pad can be cut shorter and re-centered on the strap if the pad prevents you from tightening the strap completely. (See illustration 2 in box at the bottom of the page.)

Step Five: Tighten the lowest strap on the brace.

Step Six: Tighten the two top straps that secure the upper shell to your thigh.



Illustration #1 (KNEE CENTER): When you begin to put on your brace, it is important for the hinges to be aligned with knee center. The medical professional fitting your brace can show you the location of your Femoral Epicondyle (apex of the lateral condyle), which is the best landmark for identifying the axis of rotation of your knee joint. Additionally, when you tighten the Synergistic Suspension Strap in the flexion fold behind your knee, the hinges should be aligned at knee center at the right height on your leg.



Illustration #2 (SHORTENING STRAPS):

The straps on your brace can be cut to any length. Simply remove the alligator closure from the end of the strap, cut the strap to the desired length, and reposition the closure onto the end of the strap. Be very careful not to cut any strap too short! Additionally, any comfort pad that is attached to the inside of a strap (see illustration) must be removed and cut shorter if the pad interferes with your ability to completely tighten the strap. You can cut the pad and re-center it on the strap.



Illustration #3 (SUSPENSION): The Synergistic Suspension Strap is attached to the outside of the frame and is designed to wrap inside between the brace's lower shell and your leg. The strap is also angled to match the natural contour of the top of your calf muscle. This strap should be tightened in the flexion fold in the back of your knee.



REBEL RELIEVER BRACING Patient Instructions

Patient Benefits and Physical Activity

There are two primary benefits to be achieved from wearing your Rebel 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.

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 create a base level of corrective force. 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.

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 (see information below).

Undersleeves & Protective Covers

This brace has a soft liner and 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 one year warranty against defects or breaking. Straps, hinge covers, and other replaceable parts are covered for six months. Free remolding service (to make fitting adjustments) is provided for six months from the date of manufacturing. If you experience a problem with the fit or function of the brace, please call the medical provider who ordered your brace.

PRODUCT DISCLAIMER

This 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 brace has proven beneficial to many patients, outcomes will vary based on factors including patient age, general health, and/or lack of compliance with instructions for how to put on and use the product. 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. While a Townsend custom functional knee 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 restrict all instabilities or 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.