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CARE OF A NEW RESIDUAL LIMB

After amputation, the residual limb is highly sensitive and often subject to irritation and injury. It is, therefore, extremely important that you follow these procedures to take care of your residual limb.

- **WASH YOUR RESIDUAL LIMB DAILY.** THIS SHOULD BE DONE IN THE EVENING, AS THE RESIDUAL LIMB SHOULD ALWAYS BE DRY WHEN PUTTING ON YOUR PROSTHESIS. ALTHOUGH YOU MAY NOT BE WEARING A PROSTHESIS YET, THIS IS A GOOD HABIT TO START EARLY.
- **USE MILD SOAP WHEN WASHING YOUR RESIDUAL LIMB.** AFTER WASHING YOUR RESIDUAL LIMB WITH A MILD SOAP, RINSE IT WITH WARM WATER AND PAT IT DRY WITH A TOWEL.
- **DESENSITIZING.** SEVERAL TIMES A DAY, GENTLY MASSAGE YOUR RESIDUAL LIMB. WE ADVISE THAT RUBBING ALCOHOL BE USED ONE TO TWO TIMES A DAY WHEN MASSAGING (UNLESS OPEN AREAS ARE PRESENT OR YOU ARE ADVISED AGAINST THIS BY YOUR PHYSICIAN) MASSAGING YOUR RESIDUAL LIMB USUALLY DECREASES DISCOMFORT AND INCREASES CIRCULATION. RUBBING ALCOHOL AIDS IN TOUGHENING THE SKIN AND PREPARING YOU RESIDUAL LIMB FOR FUTURE TOTAL CONTACT FIT INSIDE OF THE PROSTHESIS.
- **NEVER USE LOTION OR HAND CREAM ON THE RESIDUAL LIMB.** LOTION WILL SOFTEN THE SKIN, BUT THE GOAL IS TO HAVE TOUGHENED SKIN WHICH WILL NOT BREAK DOWN INSIDE YOUR PROSTHESIS.
- **ALWAYS WEAR A STUMP SHRINKER OR ACE WRAP ON THE RESIDUAL LIMB.** WHETHER YOU SHOULD BE WEARING A STUMP SHRINKER OR ACE WRAP IS A DECISION THAT YOUR PHYSICIAN WILL MAKE BASED ON THE OVERALL CONDITION OF THE RESIDUAL LIMB. BOTH ITEMS IF USED CORRECTLY WILL AID IN SHAPING YOUR RESIDUAL LIMB AND CONTROL OR REDUCING SWELLING, EVEN AFTER YOU HAVE BEEN CAST AND FIT WITH A NEW PROSTHESIS IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE WRAPPING OR WEARING THE STUMP SHRINKER AS SWELLING CAN STILL OCCUR. THE SHRINKER CAN BE TAKEN OFF SEVERAL TIMES A DAY FOR MASSAGING AND OTHER DESENSITIZING ACTIVITIES.

THESE BASIC PROCEDURES ARE DESIGNED TO INCREASE THE OVERALL HEALTH OF YOUR RESIDUAL LIMB AND TO DECREASE RESIDUAL LIMB DISCOMFORT WHEN YOU BEGIN WEARING YOUR PROSTHESIS. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THESE PROCEDURES, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR PROSTHETIST.