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# Knee Brace with Extended Suspension Sleeve Fit and Care Instructions

Thank you for helping your dog/patient walk comfortably again by choosing a custom leg brace from My Pet's Brace! Our knee brace provides an effective solution for ACL/CCL injuries by controlling the side to side movement of the knee joint and preventing the shin from sliding towards the front of the femur. Please follow the instructions below and contact us if you have any questions or concerns regarding the dog's brace or progress.

**Step 1:** We recommend making an appointment with My Pet's Brace or your local veterinarian/rehabilitation professional to assist with the fitting of the brace.

**Step 2:** Watch the fitting video on our website at: [www.mypetsbrace.com/training-videos](http://www.mypetsbrace.com/training-videos).

**Step 3:** Read and follow the Fit and Care Instructions below.

## Wearing Instructions

- An CCL/ACL tear is a significant injury and will take 6-9 months to heal while wearing the brace.
- Unless otherwise instructed, use a gradual break-in schedule to allow the dog to become familiar with the brace. Start with 3 hours on the first day and increase by an additional 1 hour per day as tolerated. These do not have to be continuous hours and can be broken up into small segments. The dog should be supervised during the break-in period.
  - a. The break-in schedule allows the dog to adjust to wearing the brace, builds their skin tolerance to the brace and allows the pet family to practice putting the brace on and taking the brace off.
- After the break-in period, wearing times should build up to 8-14 hours a day. Put the brace on in the morning and take it off at night.
- The dog should never wear the brace at night or when they are crated.
- Following use, remove the brace and inspect the skin. There may be some skin redness where the brace is in contact with the dog's leg since the goal of the brace is to control and restrict certain motions. Redness should dissipate within 15 minutes. Discontinue use of the brace if there are any signs of significant hair loss, blisters, or sores and contact My Pet's Brace.
- For the first 3-6 months, the dog may not bear full weight on their injured leg even while wearing the brace. Every dog's progress is different.

## Activity Level / Restrictions

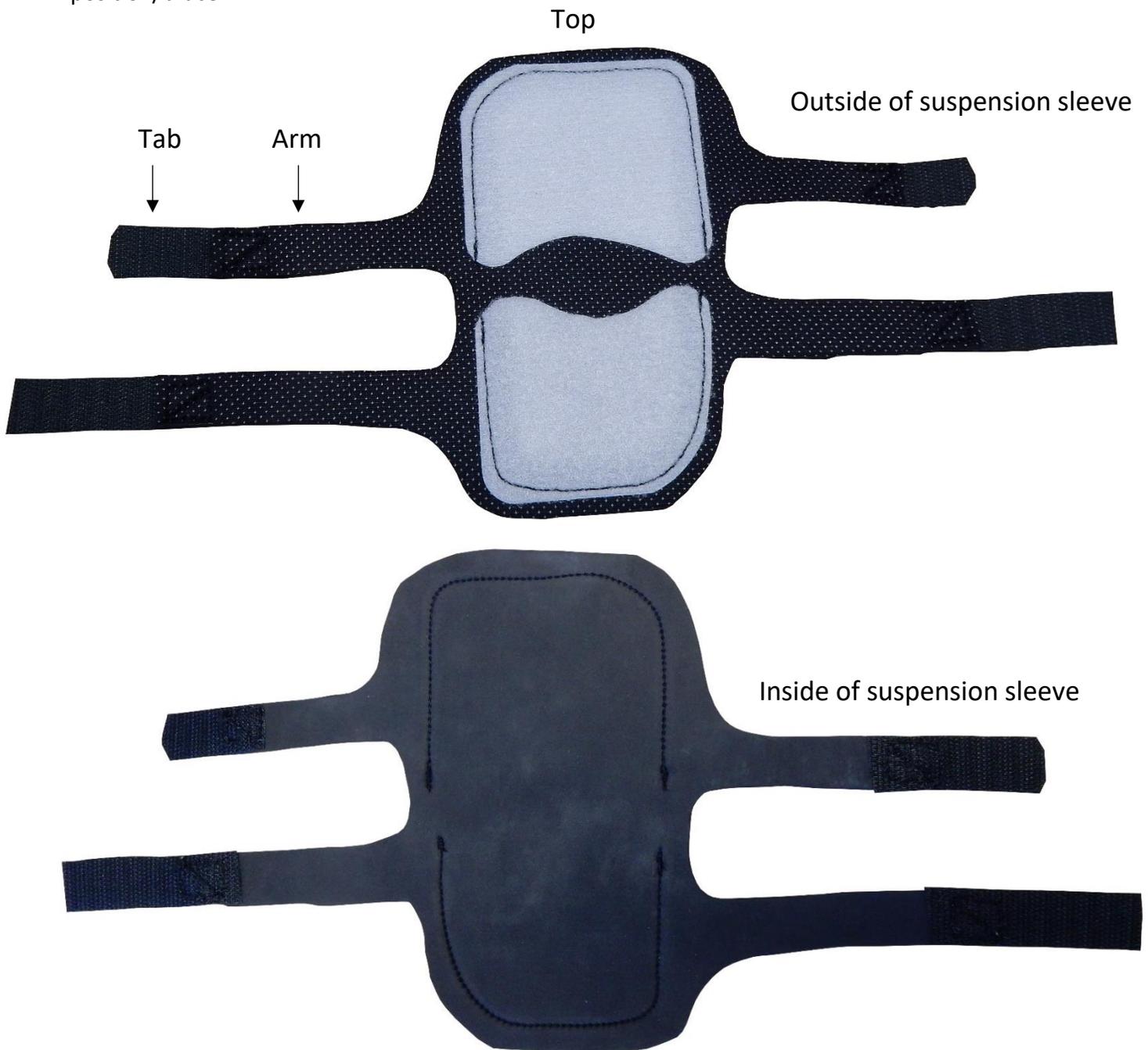
- For the first 2-3 weeks, take 2-3 short 10-15 minute walks per day. Limit stairs as much as possible. If going up more than three stairs, use a sling or towel underneath the abdomen to help them up the stairs.
- Gradually increase walks as tolerated.
- No dog or ball playing for the first 4 months.
- The brace can be worn while swimming. After the dog is done swimming- take the brace off, rinse the brace off with fresh water if in salt water, thoroughly dry the brace and the dog's leg, re-powder the suspension sleeve, then put the brace back on.
- Dogs that sleep all day and are not aroused easily, can use the brace only when they are outside.

## Cleaning the Brace

- The brace can be cleaned with a wash cloth and mild soapy water. Make certain all soap residue is removed and the brace and the dog's hair is completely dry before re-applying.
  - Remove hair/dirt from the Velcro with a wire brush, brushing in one direction on the hook portion only.
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## Fitting the Brace

- 1) The dog can be standing or lying during the fitting. Initially, lying down may be easier.
- 2) This is the suspension sleeve. **Liberaly powder the inside of the suspension sleeve and its arms with cornstarch or baby powder DAILY.** When you receive the brace, the suspension sleeve is already attached to the brace with Velcro. It has a blue line that shows the approximated height where the sleeve should be attached to the brace. Typically, it is not necessary to remove the sleeve from this position/brace.



3) Apply the brace as high as possible in the groin.

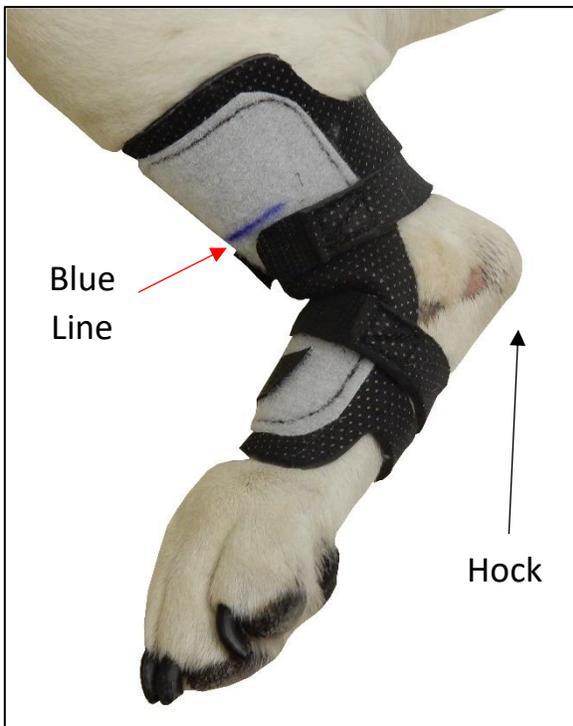


4) Secure the suspension sleeve to the dog's leg. See pictures on page 4.

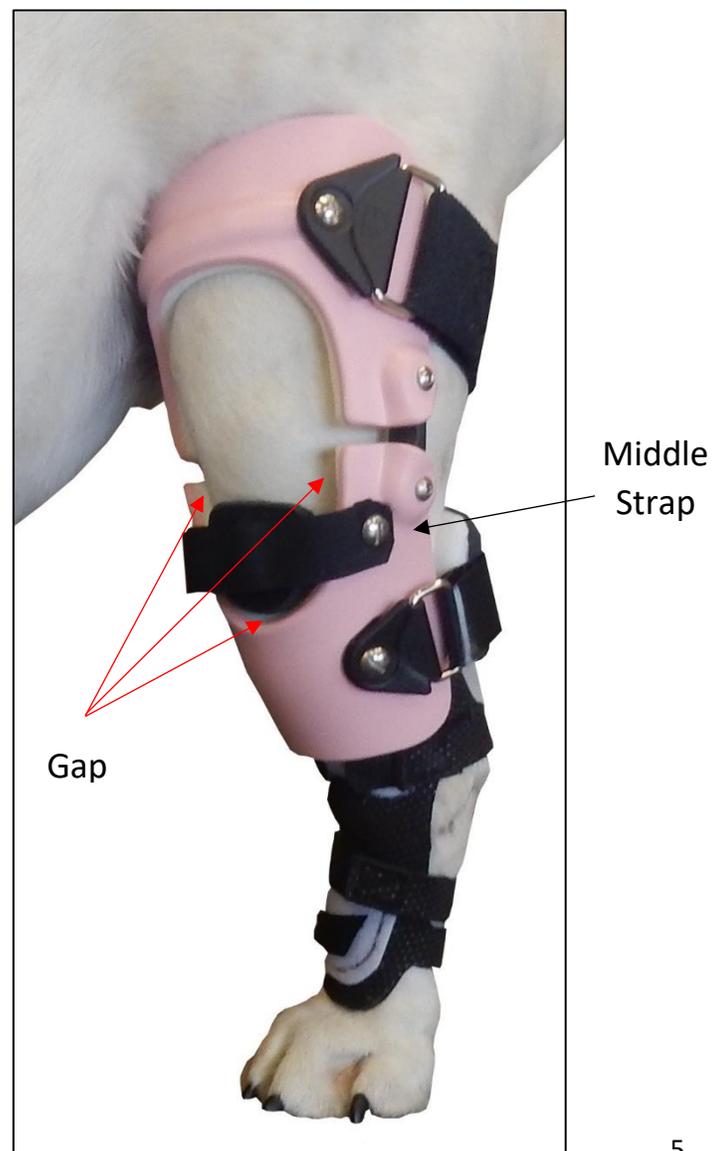
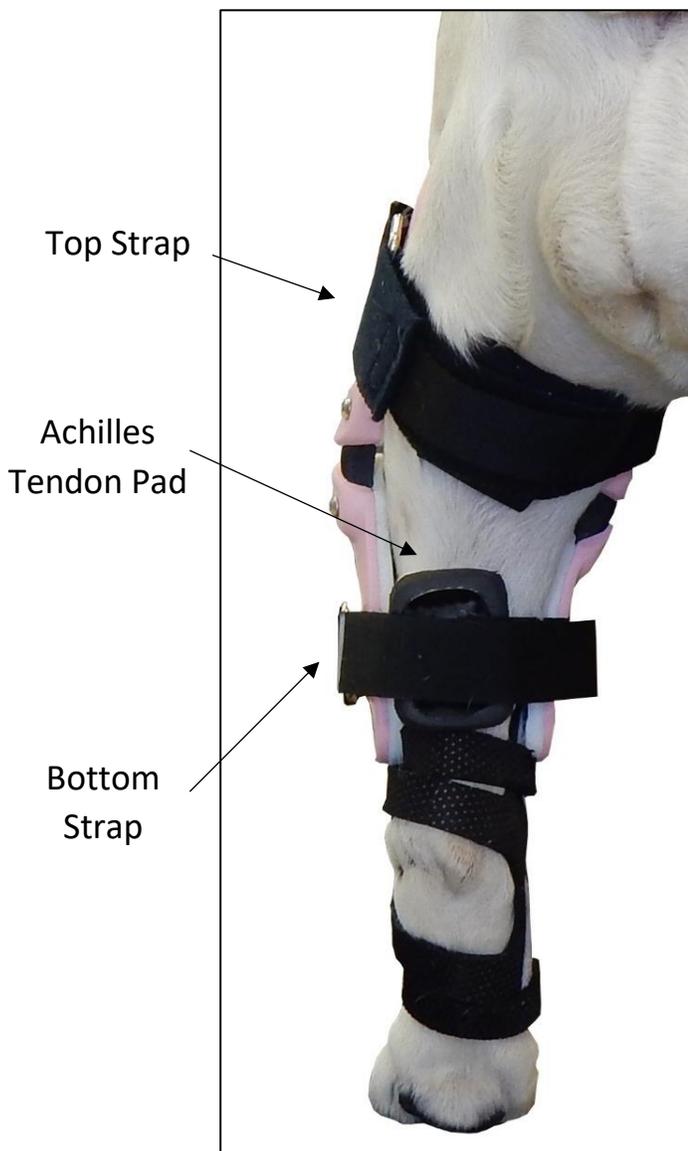
- a. Pulling from the outermost portion of the tabs, wrap the top arms of the suspension sleeve above the hock and secure the tabs to the front of the suspension sleeve, below the blue line.
- b. Wrap the bottom arms of the suspension sleeve below the hock and secure the tabs to the front of the suspension sleeve.
- c. The sleeve should be snug, but not so tight as to cause swelling or interference with the motion of the Achilles tendon. For dogs 50lbs or greater, you should be able to fit your pinky finger between your dog's leg and the straps of the suspension sleeve (less than a pinky width for dogs under 50 pounds).
- d. If the straps overlap, trim Velcro tabs as needed.



For demonstration purposes, here the suspension sleeve is shown unattached to the brace.



- 5) Tighten the bottom back strap of the brace. The foam Achilles tendon pad should be centered over the dog's Achilles tendon. The Achilles tendon pad generally goes above or over the top straps of the suspension sleeve. You should be able to fit one finger between the strap and the leg of the dog.
- 6) Tighten the top elastic strap while centering the pad in the back of the thigh. Not all braces have a pad on the top strap. You should be able to fit one finger between the strap and the leg of the dog. Less than a finger for smaller dogs.
- 7) The front middle strap is pre-adjusted based on the cast we received of the dog's leg. The white line indicates how tight the strap should be and it does not need to be changed.
  - a. On small braces, this strap is permanently attached and correctly adjusted for the dog's leg.
- 8) Around the dog's knee- a slight gap will be visible between the brace and the dog's knee. This is normal. This strap is not very tight and will only touch the dog's knee when the knee is in full extension.
- 9) The brace may slide down slightly, but the top arms of the suspension sleeve should not slide below the hock. You may need to adjust the straps once the dog is in a standing position and if going for long walks.
  - a. If the top arms suspension sleeve slide below the hock- tighten the arms of the suspension sleeve.



10) The brace is now on. Encourage the dog to walk slowly. Initially, they may hesitate to bear weight on the leg or sit because they are not used to the restriction from the straps. They may wide step or act like they're kicking sand. After a few minutes to several days, the dog will become comfortable wearing the brace. Every dog's adjustment time is different.

- a. During the first few minutes in the brace, some knuckling or walking on the top of their foot is normal. If knuckling continues, the suspension sleeve may be too tight and can be loosened.

11) On a regular basis, inspect the dog's skin for any irritation. Inspect the brace for signs of wear. Straps and padding may need to be replaced over time. This is normal wear on the brace. For replacements or repairs, call 610-286-0018 if you were mailed the brace or worked with the Pennsylvania My Pet's Brace office. Call 865-213-7172 if you worked with the Tennessee Office.



## Removing the Brace

- 1) Unhook the Velcro of the top back strap, bottom back strap and the suspension sleeve.
- 2) Do not remove the suspension sleeve from the brace itself.
- 3) Do not remove/un-Velcro the middle front strap.

## Adjustments and Modifications

During the fitting process, adjustments are often needed to obtain the most exacting fit. Sometimes, these do not become obvious until the brace has been worn for several weeks. If adjustments are needed, please contact us to discuss. Call 610-286-0018 if you were mailed the brace or worked with the Pennsylvania My Pet's Brace office. Call 865-213-7172 if you worked with the Tennessee Office. We will most likely request a picture or a video of the dog walking (taken at dog's eye level) be emailed for us to evaluate. Modification costs and replacement parts are covered under our warranty during the first 90 days after original delivery of the brace.