

A woman with short brown hair, smiling, is walking down a set of stone steps. She is wearing a long, light pink cardigan over a white button-down shirt and grey trousers. She is carrying a white quilted bag with pink accents. The background shows a modern building with large glass windows and doors.

medi

## Aids for back pain

Therapy with back orthoses

medi. I feel better.

# Strengthen muscles, reduce pain

If you are experiencing back pain due to load imbalances in everyday life or tension from sitting at a desk all day long, proven household remedies such as wheat bags and hot water bottles can provide short-term relief. Pain-relieving medication, massages and relaxation exercises can also help for a short time. But if complaints are ongoing or recurring, another solution will be required in the long term.

Back orthoses can improve posture and help relieve muscle tension. They contribute to a reduction of imbalanced movements, stabilise the spine and remove strain from painful areas. In this white paper you will find everything you need to know about current aids for back complaints. You will find out what is special about the medi back orthoses and what you need to take into account to choose the right aid. We also tell you how supports and orthoses are categorised and which costs are covered by health insurance.

Generally, women suffer from back pain more frequently than men. On the one hand, women are more likely to wear shoes with high heels that strain the back. Pregnancy also greatly stresses the skeleton and connective tissue – which can cause spinal pain. Menstrual pains can reach the back as well. In addition, back complaints can be caused by osteoporosis, which also affects women more often than men.<sup>1</sup>

## The difference between supports and orthoses

Supports and orthoses are also referred to as orthopaedic aids. They are aids that are worn, carried with you or taken when you move house. Taking into account individual circumstances, they are also needed to

1. prevent an imminent disability,
2. ensure the success of a treatment, or
3. compensate for obstructions to day-to-day life – insofar as they are not everyday items.<sup>2</sup>

Both supports and orthoses are used in the case of injuries or problems with the locomotor system. Even if it does not apply to every single product, put simply, supports are made of elastic material and support the affected body parts, while orthoses have a stable form and often have a posture-correcting function. Both types of aids surround the body part affected and are generally in direct contact with the skin. Often only small differences in the construction or the materials used differentiate a support from an orthosis.

### medi back products are orthoses

Due to their composition (e.g. integrated stabilisation rods or tension strap systems), the back products from medi are termed back orthoses. In general conversation, however, people tend to use the terms support and orthosis interchangeably. eurocom e.V. (manufacturer association for compression therapy and orthopaedic aids) explains the difference between supports and orthoses as follows:

#### Supports

Supports are aids that surround or are laid onto the relevant body parts and are usually prefabricated. They consist of soft textiles that not only adapt well to the body's shape but also fully allow controlled movements. As well as their



compressing function, supports are therefore also stabilising and supportive and guide movements. Thanks to their light compression, supports also promote circulation and increase muscle temperature. Supports are primarily used to treat acute or ongoing tissue problems.<sup>3</sup>

#### Orthoses

Orthoses, in contrast to supports, have stabilising supporting elements made from plastic and metal alongside elastic materials. These often very technically sophisticated aids fix, support, guide or correct in particular the affected joints and body parts. In some areas of treatment, a differentiation is made between passive and active orthoses. While passive orthoses primarily relieve strain on, support and fix the unstable spine, active orthoses should aid the active correction of the patient's impaired spine movement.<sup>4</sup>

# Features of a good orthosis

As orthoses are used to support the locomotor system day-to-day, they should fit to the body as accurately as possible. You should get measured at the hospital to find the right size for you. A breathable, skin-friendly material that feels pleasant to wear is also important. The fabric of the aid should absorb sweat and moisture well and guide it to the surface to evaporate. Modern orthoses are also easy to use and are characterised by long-lasting durability.

And you don't have to sacrifice looking good: you can wear any outfit with an orthosis!



## Orthoses from medi

The innovative products from medi relieve strain on the back without too strongly restricting the patient's movement. The result: less pain and more zest for life at work and at home. As well as their relieving function, many orthoses from medi also exert light compression. In addition, the moisture-transporting Clima Comfort material is breathable and makes the orthosis comfortable to wear. Sweat and moisture are reliably transported to the surface and the skin can breathe. Putting on the lumbar orthoses from medi is extremely simple, as the highly-elastic fabric makes it easy for people with reduced mobility too. The comfort zone ensures that the orthoses from medi don't cut into the skin even after they have been worn for a long time. Orthoses from medi are used by patients with back pain and muscle tension. They can benefit in a variety of ways from models with an integrated pad: these

products not only stabilise the spine and reduce incorrect load bearing, but also offer a pain-relieving massaging effect. The compressive fabric also promotes circulation. In addition, it ensures the reliable absorption and evaporation of sweat and preservation of the skin's own moisture. The special cut in the groin (comfort zone) ensures that the orthosis sits correctly and comfortably in most everyday situations. Using medi lumbar orthoses is easy: placed around the affected body part like a belt, they are fastened using Velcro. The back orthosis Spinomed, which is worn by osteoporosis patients, can be easily put on like a rucksack.

Learn more about the complete back orthosis range from medi:

[www.medi.de/en/products/orthoses/back-braces/](http://www.medi.de/en/products/orthoses/back-braces/)

## Do I need a prescription for treatment?

If needed, orthoses for the back can be prescribed by a doctor and are available in specialist medical shops. There you can receive advice on which model is most suited to your needs and if any adaptations need to be made to the aids. A correct and fully-completed prescription also makes it easier for the hospital to invoice the health insurance company. You have 30 days to take the prescription to a specialist store and receive your orthosis. Good to know: none of our aids deduct from the doctor's medicine and therapeutic services budget. This means you don't have to think about requesting a new orthosis prescription at the end of the quarter.

Before you receive your orthosis in the hospital, your health insurer will check whether the prescription from your doctor



counts as a standard prescription. It must be necessary, appropriate and cost-efficient. With a standard prescription, the legally-insured party usually has to make a supplementary payment of ten percent of the costs – no less, however, than five euros and no more than ten. If a standard prescription is

not sufficient and you decide on a customised, usually higher-end aid, you will have to pay a surcharge. This amount will be the difference between the price borne by the insurance company and the actual cost of the support or orthosis.

## Conclusion

Orthoses make a key contribution to improving back health. As you will be wearing the aid every day, as a patient you should place great importance on quality and comfort.

Would you like a free brochure on back health? At the medi service centre we are happy to help: **+49 (0) 921 912 750**



## Sources

- 1 <http://www.mydoc.de/fitness/ruecken/frauen-bekommen-oeffter-rueckenschmerzen-1465> (last accessed: 16.11.2017)
- 2 Source: Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB IX) Neuntes Buch „Rehabilitation und Teilhabe behinderter Menschen“, § 31 Hilfsmittel (German Social Security Statute Book, Ninth Book, “Rehabilitation and Participation of People with Disabilities”, Section 31 Aids) [www.sozialgesetzbuch-sgb.de/sgbix/31.html](http://www.sozialgesetzbuch-sgb.de/sgbix/31.html) (last accessed: 27.11.2017)
- 3 Supports, <http://eurocom-info.de/orthopaedische-hilfsmittel/bandagen/> (last accessed: 14.02.2017)
- 4 Orthoses, <http://eurocom-info.de/orthopaedische-hilfsmittel/orthesen/> (last accessed: 14.02.2017)

### Further information:

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