

## Action Reliever: a knee brace for people with knee osteoarthritis

Approximately five million people in the UK have knee osteoarthritis, and this number is predicted to increase to 8.3 million by 2035<sup>1</sup>.

Osteoarthritis is a disease which initially affects the cartilage of the knee. Cartilage covers the ends of the thigh bone (femur), shin bone (tibia) and kneecap (patella). It acts as a shock absorber and enables the joint to slide, allowing mobility. An envelope of fluid around the joint known as the synovial capsule lubricates it while also nourishing the cartilage.

With age, cartilage progressively loses its flexibility and wears thin. Excess pressure on this weakened cartilage will cause it to become damaged. This will gradually cause it to disappear in some areas revealing the underlying bone. The loss of cartilage means that bones are in contact with each other on movement and this can become very painful. This pain may lead to avoidance of physical activity, including everyday tasks such as walking, going upstairs, and housework.

In turn, reduced movement diminishes not only fitness, strength and stamina,



but also flexibility and weight control, which can increase pain and stiffness. Resuming physical activity and suitable exercises can break this vicious circle and increase wellbeing considerably.

### Action Reliever knee brace

Action Reliever is an off-loading knee brace. This means that it reduces the physical load on the part of the knee affected by osteoarthritis, and spreads it evenly throughout the knee joint as a whole by holding the leg in a normal alignment. This helps to reduce compression and inflammation and is proven to relieve pain<sup>2</sup>.

**Action Reliever** can help to alleviate the pain associated with osteoarthritis. Here we explain how it works and how to apply and adjust your knee brace.

## Why use Action Reliever?



The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)<sup>3</sup> highlighted that people with osteoarthritis who have joint pain or instability benefited from the use of a brace, in addition to their core treatment.

Studies have also shown that the use of an off-loading knee brace is of benefit for people with osteoarthritis who are waiting for surgery<sup>4</sup>. Patients who wore a brace for more than two years did not need surgery when followed up after 8 years<sup>4</sup>. The use of an off-loading knee brace has also been shown to improve quality of life for some people with osteoarthritis<sup>4</sup>.

1. Versus Arthritis; 2. Benning et al (2017) Orthopadie Technik 08/17; 24-30; 3. NICE (2008) Osteoarthritis care and management; 4. Paul et al (2017) Br Med J.

## Fitting your Action Reliever knee brace



1. Loosen all the straps.



2. Ensure that the two intersecting straps are positioned centrally.



3. While sitting, pull-on the knee brace, with the kneecap positioned in the centre of the kneecap ring. Stand up to make sure there is no creasing.

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4. Sit with the knee bent. First adjust the lower rear strap, then the higher rear strap. The strap should be snug, not tight.



5. To adjust strap length, remove the self-gripping pad, shorten the strap by cutting, then re-attach the pad on the strap.



6. Adjust the front straps in the same way.



7. If creases form, the angle of each strap can be adjusted. Open the rear hook and loop openings on the crossover self-gripping straps.



8. Stand and take a few steps. To adjust the tension while wearing the knee brace, simply re-position the self-gripping tabs.



9. The loop on the left clasp is for leverage when closing the clasp; don't use it to unclip, just use your fingers. To speed removal and reapplication, simply unclip (1) and pull back (2) to remove.

## Frequently asked questions and answers

### How do I know that Action Reliever is suitable for my condition?

Action Reliever is an off-loading knee brace for people with mild to moderate osteoarthritis, or injuries, e.g. a meniscal tear, that needs off-loading. Your GP or other healthcare professional will be able to advise if it is ok for you to use Action Reliever. You can do this via a telephone consultation or in person.

### How do I know what size of Action Reliever brace to order?

Action Reliever is available in eight different sizes. To ensure you obtain the right size, your GP or healthcare professional may measure your limb, or alternatively you can take the measurements yourself. Full instructions for measuring are available at the Action Reliever website: <https://www.actionreliever.co.uk/measuringfitting>. Alternatively, you can email [patient@thuasne.co.uk](mailto:patient@thuasne.co.uk) or call **01892 481620** for further information and help.

### Is Action Reliever available on prescription?

Action Reliever has been available on prescription in the UK since late 2019, however, some healthcare professionals

may be unaware of this. You can obtain a prescription by speaking to your GP.

### What do I do with my prescription?

You can take your prescription to your local pharmacy or you can use Daylong, a Dispensing Appliance Contractor (DAC). This simply means that Daylong can also dispense your prescription and send it to you at home, free of charge.

### Should I wear Action Reliever under or over my clothes?

Ideally, Action Reliever should be worn directly on the skin. The brace is comfortable to wear, and is made from silicon thread that is anatomically knitted so it can slide up the leg easily. The brace does not deliver compression behind the knee, meaning that it should not be tight in this area and dig in, and is therefore comfortable to wear. Finally, the Action Reliever is invisible when worn under most clothing.

### Can I wash my Action Reliever?

Yes, your garment can be washed using warm water and detergent. It may be helpful to have two garments so that one can be worn, while one is washed and dried on a flat surface.

Please contact our friendly customer care team on: **0800 195 0160**