

# Caring for Your Upper Limb & Prosthesis

The skin on your residual limb is the first point of contact with your prosthesis. It is important you care for it properly.

## 5 DAILY TO-DO'S FOR HEALTHY SKIN AND PROSTHETIC CARE

**Inspect your skin daily.** Preventing wounds, infections, and rashes is critical to ensuring comfort and avoiding potential complications. Using a small hand mirror, check the bottom and back of your residual limb. Pay attention to the skin around your surgical scar and under your prosthetic socket.

You may see some redness, which is a normal skin reaction to pressure. If the skin looks very red for more than 20 minutes or so after removing your prosthesis, or if you have a rash, broken skin, blisters, or see signs of an infection, such as your skin feeling warm to the touch, consult your prosthetist.



**Wash your residual limb daily.** Keeping your skin clean will help you avoid cysts, pimples, and skin infections and minimize odors from sweat. Wash all surfaces of your limb gently with a mild soap, rinse, and dry thoroughly.

**Always wear a freshly washed shrinker and socks.** Wash and rotate your shrinkers and socks regularly to help them last longer. In warm weather, you may have to change your shrinker and socks multiple times a day, so it's a good idea to carry spares with you. Avoid putting your shrinker or socks in the dryer.

If you use a gel liner, clean it daily to prevent odors and bacterial growth. A daily wash will help prevent odors and bacterial growth. Turn the liner inside out and use a small amount of mild soap to wash the gel side.

### Lotions, creams, and hair removal

Waxing, shaving, and laser hair removal can lead to infected hair follicles, which could leave you unable to wear your prosthesis until the infection clears up. Moisturizers and skin creams may interact negatively with the materials used to make your prosthesis liner, socks, etc. If dry skin and/or hair removal are a concern, consult your prosthetist.



For more information, scan the code or visit [HangerClinic.com/ULResources](https://HangerClinic.com/ULResources).

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**Avoid damage by not scrubbing too hard or submerging your liner.** To dry, turn your liner back so the gel side is facing in and hang or lay it flat until completely dry. When you see or feel wear spots, contact your prosthetist.

**Clean your socket.** Use a soft cloth to wipe down the inside and outside of your socket every day. A few times a week, clean your socket at night using rubbing alcohol to make sure it has time to dry. Do NOT submerge your socket in water.



### Expect to sweat.

Many people with limb loss experience higher overall body temperature and increased sweating. Drink plenty of water and wear breathable clothing.

Over time, your body may produce less sweat as you adjust to wearing your prosthesis. Use of an antiperspirant on your limb may reduce sweating. It is recommended that you use an unscented, basic, antiperspirant and apply it prior to bed. Applying it the night before will allow the antiperspirant to absorb into your pores and reduce sweating the following day.

Your prosthetist may recommend special socks, antiperspirants, or other treatments to help.



### Wear & Care Guides

To learn more about skin care and cleaning, check out our wear and care guides by scanning the code or visiting [HangerClinic.com/Wear-Care](https://HangerClinic.com/Wear-Care).



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