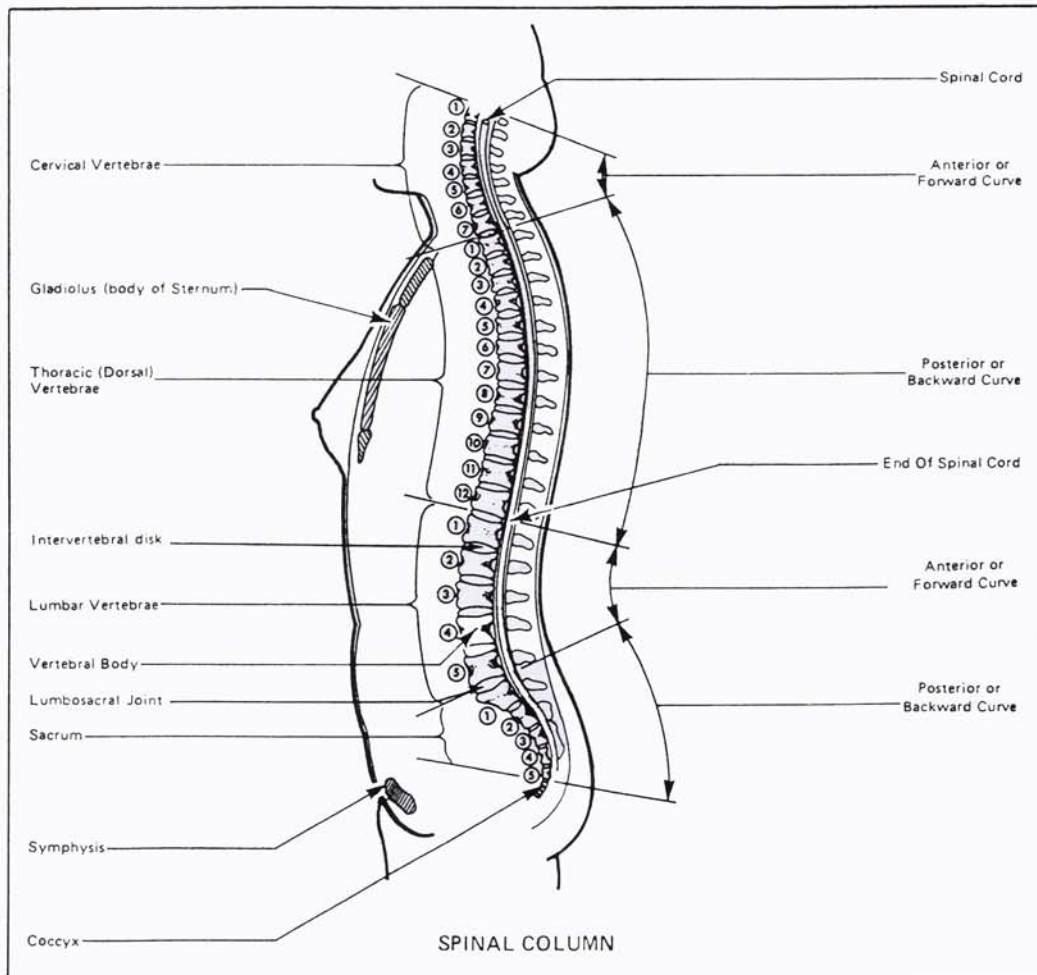




# Ballert

## ORTHOPEDIC OF CHICAGO

### TLSO (BODY JACKET) INSTRUCTION SHEET



#### PURPOSE:

The TLSO (Thoracolumbarsacral orthosis) also known as a body jacket, has been prescribed to give support to the spinal column from the sixth thoracic vertebra (T6) to the sacrum. The TLSO will keep the middle to lower back immobile and limit the back from bending forward or backward and from twisting from side to side. The brace must be worn until either healing or spinal cord stability has been reached. This will probably take about three months. Your doctor will provide a definite date when your brace can be removed.

You must carefully follow the instructions for the use of the brace. Before you are discharged from the hospital, the nurse will review the use of the brace with you and a family member. Please feel free to ask questions. It is important that you understand how to use your TLSO brace.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

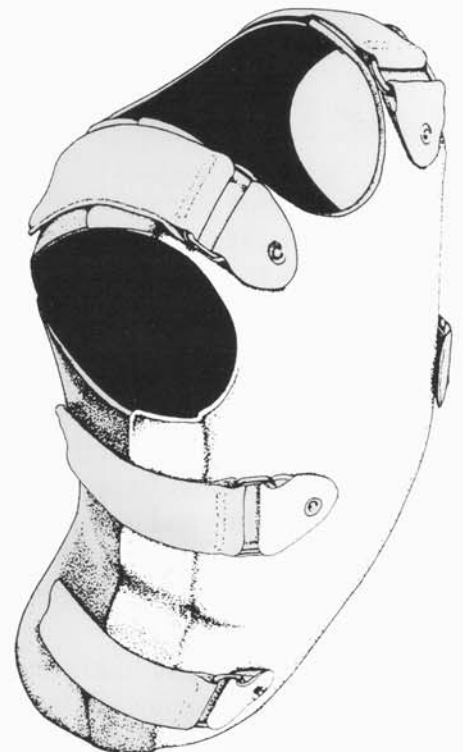
1. Always wear your TLSO, even at night, if your doctor tells you to. This is very important! Your doctor may only require you to wear your TLSO when out of bed.
2. Wear only a T-shirt or body shirt (tight) under your TLSO. This must be tight and conforming, without wrinkles.
3. Your TLSO brace is custom molded by a certified orthotist. This ensures that your TLSO fits snugly. The snug fit is needed to maintain proper spinal alignment.
4. Remove your TLSO only to wash underneath or to change your T-shirt. You must lie flat in bed to remove the brace. Keep your back flat and straight. Rotate your body in a log roll manner.
5. Your brace will not be damaged by water. If your doctor allows, you may take a shower in your TLSO. Remember, though it is important to dry thoroughly under your brace.
6. If your brace is rubbing against your skin, causing redness and irritation, or if you lose weight, your brace may need adjustment. Call your orthotist to make these adjustments.
7. Do not attempt to bend or to lift objects over 10 pounds.
8. The cost of your TLSO will be added to your hospital bill or will be billed to your insurance.

### **PUTTING YOUR TLSO ON:**

Depending on your condition or your physician's prescription you may have been fitted with either a one-piece (front opening) or two-piece (bi-valve) body jacket. In either case, you will have to position your body jacket properly.

#### **A. For the Two-piece Jacket or Clamshell 2-part Brace:**

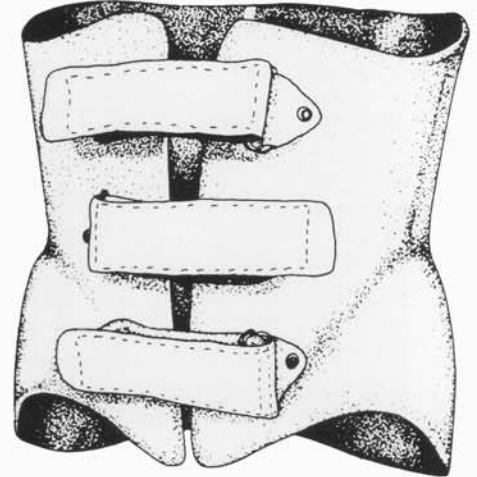
1. Someone must always help you to put your brace on and take it off.
2. While flat in bed first log roll on your side. Have your helper place the back of the jacket parallel to your spine and roll into the back half of the two piece jacket.
3. If your TLSO is not centered properly, roll to the opposite side to adjust it.
4. Make sure that the indented areas on the side of the brace are between your lowest rib on top and your pelvis on the bottom. If not, move the brace up or down to the proper position.
5. Roll flat on your back with your hips and knees flexed. Lay the front of your TLSO across your abdomen. The top piece must overlap the bottom piece. Fasten the brace using the Velcro closures on both sides of your TLSO.
6. The Velcro straps should be marked with a pen line to indicate how tight they should be kept.



You will know that you have properly positioned your body jacket by checking the position of the indentation's on either side of the plastic shell. These indentations fit at your waist between your hip bones and your lower ribs, in line with your belly button. The front edge of the jacket will fit very low in the front, pressing slightly on your legs when you sit upright. The bottom back of the jacket will fit approximately one inch above a hard sitting surface.

**B. For Front Opening Brace:**

1. Someone must always help you to put your brace on and take it off.
2. While flat on your back in bed, flex your hips and knees.
3. Your helper slides the brace under your upper legs.
4. Your helper slips the brace up under the buttocks while holding the it open and you help by pushing up with your heels on the bed.
5. Make sure the indented areas on the side of the brace are between your lowest rib on top and your pelvis on the bottom. If not, move the brace up or down as needed.
6. The Velcro straps should be marked with a pen line to indicate how tight they should be kept.



You will know that you have properly positioned your body jacket by checking the position of the indentions on either side of the plastic shell. These indentations fit at your waist between your hip bones and your lower ribs, in line with your belly button. The front edge of the jacket will fit very low in the front, pressing slightly on your legs when you sit upright. The bottom back of the jacket will fit approximately one inch above a hard sitting surface.

**REMOVAL OF THE BRACE (CLAMSHELL 2-PART):**

1. While flat in bed, detach the Velcro straps from the sides of your TLSO and lift the front off.
2. Roll to your side and have your helper pull off the back of your TLSO.

**WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR**

Please notify your doctor immediately if you experience the onset or worsening of the following symptoms:

- \* Numbness or Tingling
- \* Weakness of your arms or legs
- \* Pain
- \* Incisional drainage

**IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY OTHER PROBLEMS OR DISCOMFORT FROM YOUR USE OF YOUR TLSO PLEASE CONTACT YOUR BALLERT PRACTITIONER \_\_\_\_\_ AT (773) 878-2445**

## PREVENTION OF SKIN PROBLEMS

Check the skin surfaces under your TLSO, particularly where you have bony protuberances, for red or irritated spots each day. Skin irritations can result from moisture or bacteria on the skin or from a TLSO that is not properly positioned.

**Protecting Your Skin:** Always wear a clean, dry, well-fitting, 100% cotton T-shirt under your TLSO. Avoid wrinkles in the fabric by folding excess fabric over the stomach area.

**Bathing:** Ask your physician for bathing instructions and precautions. Remember to thoroughly dry your skin and the inside of your TLSO before putting it back on or skin irritation may result.

**Skin Products:** Alcohol wipes can reduce the moisture and bacteria on skin surfaces under the TLSO. Some skin powders may be beneficial; however take care not to use too much powder which might lead to caking and additional irritation under the TLSO.

**Chafing and Pressure Spots:** These may result from wearing your TLSO either too loose or too tight. Always check the position and tightness of your TLSO.

**Rash:** If the TLSO causes a rash or skin irritation try to change your T-shirt more often. The irritation may be caused by perspiration, heat, laundry detergent, or fabric softeners.

## CLEANING YOUR TLSO:

Use a damp soapy cloth or sponge to periodically clean all surfaces of your jacket. Be certain that the jacket is thoroughly dry before you put it on. Rubbing alcohol may be useful on the interior surfaces of your jacket to destroy bacteria and to remove soap residues, that may both cause irritation.



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