

# Having a custom-made silicone contour prosthesis (artificial body part)

Prosthesis Clinic

Last reviewed: December 2025

Next review: December 2028

Information for Patients

Leaflet number: 1246 Version: 2

## What is a contour prosthesis?

A contour prosthesis is a fake (artificial) body part. It is often made from silicone. We make it to look like the missing area of your body. We colour it to best match your skin tone and blend in with the area around it.

You may need a prosthesis if you have lost part of your body because of an accident, injury, or surgery. We make each one specially for the person who needs it.

A contour prosthesis tries to help keep the natural shape of the body part. We often use contour prostheses for the legs or hip areas. A prosthetist at the Prosthesis clinic makes custom contour prostheses.

## How is it held in place on the body?

A contour prosthesis often stays in place because of the shape of your body. It fits in well with the body. We can use other method to make sure it stays in place.

### Held in place by medical glue (adhesive):

Many people use special medical glue to help keep their prosthesis in place. The glue goes on the prosthesis, and then it is gently pressed onto the skin. There are different kinds of glue:

- water-based (white)
- solvent-based (clear)
- adhesive strips (double-sided tape).

At first, using glue can feel tricky. But with practice, it gets easier and becomes part of your daily routine.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.uhleicester.nhs.uk](http://www.uhleicester.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net](mailto:uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net)

## Held in place by your clothing:

Some prostheses can stay in place by being tucked between your skin and clothes. This can be tucked into tights, vests, or trousers. You do not always need glue to hold them in place. Sometimes the shape of your body helps it to stay in position. In this method you do not need glue. You can still use glue to feel more secure.

## Held in place by a silicone adhesive:

You can use a silicone adhesive to give you a sticky fitting surface. This helps to hold the prosthesis in place.

## Types of filling in prostheses

Prostheses can be made in different ways. They can be filled with:

- **Gel:** Some are filled with soft gel to help them bend and move more easily. They are covered with a smooth skin made from silicone.
- **Hollow (air):** Some are made hollow or with a soft middle to make them lighter. This helps them stay in place better.
- **Silicone sponge:** Some are filled with a light sponge material and covered with silicone skin. This also makes them lighter to wear.

## How do we make your prosthesis?

There are many steps to making a contour prosthesis. This can include:

- taking a mould or using a scanner to copy the shape of your body
- carving wax
- colouring silicone to match the colour of your skin

You may need to have up to 4 appointments before it is made. You will then need to come for a fitting appointment when it is ready.

Your clinician will talk to you about this at the start of your treatment plan.

## How do I put it on and take it off?

A prosthetist at the Prosthesis clinic will show you the correct way to put on and take off your prosthesis. This will depend on the way it needs to be attached to your body.

Putting your prosthesis on in the right place can take a bit of practice at first. It will get easier as you become more confident.

## **When can I wear my prosthesis?**

We will let you know when to wear your prosthesis. You can put it on in the morning and throughout the day. Or based on your needs.

We advise that you do not sleep in your prosthesis. This will give your skin a break from the prosthesis.

## **Can I wear my prosthesis for sport activities?**

You can wear prostheses for most sporting activities. We may suggest taking it off for contact sports to avoid damage to the prosthesis.

The chemicals in swimming pools can slowly change the colour of the prosthesis. If you go swimming you will need to rinse the prosthesis in clean water once you are out of the pool.

## **Taking care of your prosthesis**

You must keep all prostheses clean. You will need to clean and check them regularly. This will help to stop the build up of bacteria. We will explain this to you at time of fitting the prosthesis.

- You must wash your hands with soap and water before touching or handling your contour prosthesis .
- Take care with the edges of the prosthesis. They are very thin and prone to tearing if removed too quickly.
- You should clean your prosthesis every time you remove it.
- Carefully clean your prosthesis with warm water and scent free, colour free soap. Do not rub aggressively. You can use a gauze or very soft toothbrush to clean. You should take extra care at the fine edges as they may tear and on the outside surface. This is so you do not remove any of the surface colour.
- Rinse clean and pat dry with a tissue or towel.

Cigarette smoke and strong chemicals can change the colour of your prosthesis. Try to keep it away from these things.

## **Where should I keep my prosthesis when I am not wearing it?**

Make sure that your prosthesis is clean and dry before storing it.

Keep your prosthesis in a dry container or drawer away from direct sunlight and heat. Sunlight can affect the colour of the silicone. If your prosthesis has fine edges, heat (such as from radiators) can cause these to curl.



## Will I have follow-up appointments after my prosthesis has been fitted?

We may ask you to return to the clinic to check the fit and how you are managing the prosthesis. You can use this time to ask any more questions you may have.

As long as you continue to wear your prosthesis you will continue to have review appointments with your clinician to monitor it. How often we see you will depend on the type of prosthesis you have.

## How long will my prosthesis last?

You may need adjusting and/ or replacing the prosthesis over time.

How long you can use your prosthesis depends on many factors. Your prosthetist will be able to advise you when they think you are in need of a new one. We can make a replacement prosthesis if needed.

## What should I do if I have a problem or have any questions?

If you have any problems with your prosthesis, please contact the service using the numbers below for help and advice (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.00pm):

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery: **0116 258 5671**

Maxillofacial Laboratory/ Prosthesis Clinic: **0116 258 5255**



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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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