

## Amputee Care and Prosthetic Rehabilitation

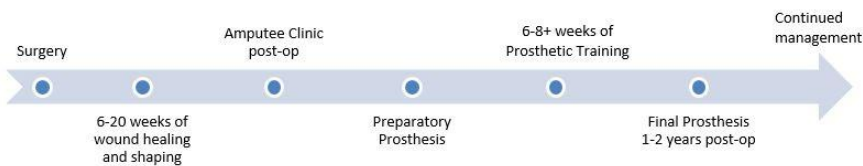


**Overview:** After an amputation, getting a prosthesis (artificial limb) is not guaranteed for everyone. To use a prosthesis successfully takes a lot of energy and good problem solving skills. You also need to participate in several weeks of physiotherapy to learn to use and manage a prosthesis.



**Post-Operative Expectations:** Wound healing times are different for everyone. Your wound needs to be healed before you are considered for a prosthesis. It is important that you learn to properly wrap your amputated limb with a tensor to get it ready for a prosthesis. Wrapping should be done for at least 3 weeks before you can start the process of getting a prosthesis.

**Next Steps:** After an amputation, you will be referred to Amputee Clinic, where you will meet the physiatrist (doctor), prosthetist, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and social worker. At this time the team will decide if you are ready for a prosthesis and will help you with the next steps.



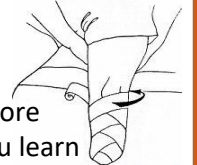
**Prosthetic Process:** If you are ready to start the process, a preparatory prosthesis is made by the prosthetist. This is a short-term use practice device that you use when learning how use a prosthesis. As you go through many weeks of physiotherapy, your amputated limb starts to shrink and change shape. This is one reason that you may need many prostheses over your lifetime. When your amputated limb stops changing size, a definitive or final prosthesis is made.

Any time there is a change in limb shape or size, a new prosthetic socket will have to be made. Management of fit is key to prosthetic success.

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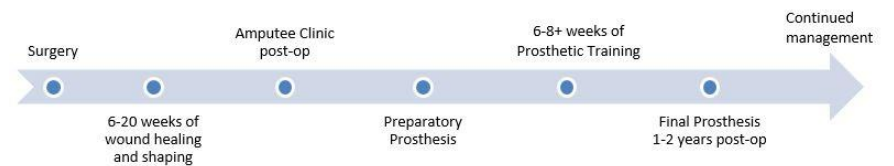


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## Guidelines for Prosthetic Readiness

### Condition of your amputated leg

- You should be well healed, with no open areas, staples or sutures
- The leg must be clean and dry
- You should be consistently shaping your leg with a tensor or shrinker sock
- Your leg should be a cylindrical or conical shape
- You should be able to fully straighten your hip and knee joints
- You must be able to tolerate the pressure of a tensor, shrinker sock or PPAM aid

### Condition of your remaining limb

- You must be able to weight bear on the remaining leg
- You must not have open wounds on your foot
- You must have supportive shoes in good condition that do not cause areas of pressure

### Functional Ability

- You must be able to transfer independently (from wheelchair to bed, toilet, car, etc.)
- You must maintain good hygiene
- You should be able to toilet independently
- You should be able to maintain good posture when sitting, lying and walking
- You should be able to stand and balance with limited support
- You must have sufficient hand/arm function and upper body strength
- You should be able to hop short distances with a walker (10 -15 meters)
- You should have adequate activity tolerance (can be up for 3 hours or more)
- You should be able to follow your provided exercise plan safely and independently
- You must be willing and motivated to participate in therapy
- You must be able to determine when it is safe to wear your prosthesis
- You must be able to demonstrate new learning or problem solving, and to learn the details of the prosthetic fitting process

### Other Considerations

- Your weight must be less than 330lbs for below the knee amputation, less than 250lbs for above the knee amputation
- You must be aware of the costs associated with owning prostheses. Please contact Northland Prosthetics & Orthotics for more detailed information regarding costs and financial assistance
- You must be able to check your skin or have a caregiver available who can do this for you daily
- If you have other medical conditions that make it difficult to participate in therapy this must be considered
- You must not have uncontrolled alcohol/substance abuse problems
- You must have a reasonable discharge plan and an accessible environment to go home to
- Your pain should be controlled.

Northland Prosthetics & Orthotics Inc.

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