



NeuLife Rehabilitation Center  
**The Amputation Help  
and Resource Guide**



# The Amputation Help and Resource Guide

Amputation is a surgical procedure that is performed to remove all or part of a limb or extremity. There are several causes as to why amputation must be performed, such as trauma; illness, such as diabetes; or infection at a distal site. The process of amputation is complex and typically involves rehabilitation therapy and potential prosthetic devices. While it is a complicated medical process that has affected millions, amputation has not stopped many people from continuing to live active and healthy lives. <http://www.1800wheelchair.ca/news/post/amputation-help-and-resource-guide.aspx>

## Amputation History

The process of amputation has dated back for centuries, when removal of a limb was a necessary procedure due to illness or injury. Prosthetic devices were first developed in the 15th century, although they were heavy and crudely formed. Technology and procedures continued to evolve and by the 19th century, amputations were performed more frequently, particularly during the Civil War. Today, amputations are specialized medical procedures and prosthetic devices have advanced as technology continues to progress.

- **Amputation:** A brief history describing the development of surgical amputations  
<http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife/techniques/amputation.aspx>
- **Civil War Amputation:** A brief explanation of the process of amputation during the Civil War  
<http://www.sonofthesouth.net/leefoundation/amputation.htm>
- **Prosthetics Throughout History:** A history of prosthetics and amputation history  
<http://www.out-on-a-limb.org/out-on-a-limb/%28S%2820mepjlecjxqvdhcqr0sbxdc%29%29/page.aspx?page=103>

## Types of Amputations

Amputations are classified as being either minor or major. Minor amputations are those that involve a digit, such as a toe or finger, or a minor part of the body being removed, such as a small part of the foot. Major amputations include removal of all or part of an extremity, such as removal of an arm or hand, or the portion of the leg below the knee. Major amputations are extensive operations that have greater possibilities of infections or complications following the procedure. Major amputations typically require rehabilitation therapy and the amputee may be a candidate for a prosthetic device.

- **Amputations and Amputation Surgery:** An explanation of several different types of amputations, divided between major and minor  
<http://www.vascular.co.nz/Amputation%20surgery.htm#What%20sort%20of%20amputations%20can%20be%20performed>

## Reasons for Amputation

There are various reasons why an amputation must be performed, and the decision to remove a limb is something that must be thoroughly discussed with a physician. Some illnesses, such as diabetes, reduce the amount of blood flow to distal extremities and the lack of circulation can cause damage. For example, an untreated wound in the foot of a diabetic can lead to gangrene, causing a need for amputation. Other illnesses, such as cancer, cause a tumor on a bone or part of the body that invades the surrounding tissue. To treat the cancer, the tumor and the surrounding limb must be removed for healing. The major cause of amputation is due to injury, such as a crushing force that destroys the ability to use a part of the body. For these reasons, amputation is typically a difficult but necessary decision to make.

- **Statistics on Hand and Arm Loss:** Data and information about many causes of upper extremity amputation. <http://www.aboutonehandtyping.com/statistics.html>

## Effects of Amputation

Because amputation is a major event, the reactions to the surgery vary as much as those who are involved with it. Amputation can cause an emotional response from some people due to the loss of a limb or body part. Some people continue to experience physical pain, called phantom limb pain, where their limb used to be. For those managing the emotional, psychological and physical effects of amputation, help and resources are available by physicians and professionals who can provide support.

# NeuLife's Program for Amputations

## Arm (upper-limb) Amputation

Rehabilitation includes endurance and general conditioning exercises to help strengthen muscles. The exercise program prescribed for you will depend on whether one or both arms were amputated and how much of the arm was amputated. The Physical Therapist and Occupational Therapist who works with you will help you with these exercises. During your rehabilitation here at NeuLife you will be educated by your Occupational Therapist on activities of daily living using the prosthesis, adaptive devices, or other body parts such as your mouth or feet.

After arm surgery, most people are fitted with an artificial arm. This fitting is done by a prosthetist. A prosthetist is an expert who fits, builds, and adjust artificial limbs. Prosthetists also provide advice to you and your therapist on how to use them. The prosthetist or his or her associates will most likely follow you throughout your rehabilitation.

A prosthesis is an artificial body part such as an arm or leg that consist of a socket in the rigid frame. This portion of the prosthesis is called the interface and is made up of the components and cover. The interface enables the prosthesis to be attached to the body. This portion of the prosthesis may be made up of artificial joints, feet, fingers, hands or toes.

## Leg (Lower-limb) Amputation

After leg surgery, most people are fitted with an artificial leg. This fitting is done by a prosthetist. A prosthetist is an expert who fits, builds, and adjust artificial limbs. They also provide advice to you and your therapist on how to use them. This person or company they work for will most likely follow you throughout your rehabilitation. During your stay at the hospital, the prosthetist will begin training on how to condition the stump. This is the area where the amputation took place. Conditioning this area or the stump will promote the natural process of shrinking. The stump must shrink before the fitting of the prosthesis. You will need to wear an elastic shrinker or bandage 24 hours a day so that it can help shape the stump and prevent fluid buildup in tissues.

Rehabilitation includes endurance and general, conditioning exercises, and stretches to help strengthen muscles while stretching the hip or knee. Often the person is encouraged to begin the standing and balance process in the parallel bars. The specific exercises your Physical or Occupational Therapist may be prescribed to do will depend on whether one or both legs were amputated and how much of the leg was amputated. Muscles near the amputated limb tend to shorten. This shortening, if not treated, can cause contractures. Contractures can be caused by prolonged sitting in a chair or wheelchair or lying in bed with the body not in proper alignment. Contractures limit the range of motion a person can achieve. If a contracture becomes severe, a prosthesis may not fit or function properly, resulting in a person not being able to stand or ambulate. During your stay here at NeuLife, professionals will teach you how to avoid and prevent this from happening.

During your rehabilitation here at NeuLife you will be educated by your Physical Therapist on how to:

- Put the prosthesis on
- Take it off
- Walk with it
- Care for the prosthesis and the skin of the stump

NeuLife Rehab Therapy is a team of specialists who will develop a program of exercises to improve strength, balance, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness. They will educate you on how to walk with your prosthesis. The Physical and Occupational Therapy team will work with you to develop goals that will help you achieve the ultimate goal of increasing your level of independence with your prosthesis. Goals may include least restrictive ambulation devices, stairs, and walk up and down hills.

Did you know that progress may be slower and limited for people who have an above-the-knee amputation, for older people, and for people who are weak or poorly motivated? Younger people may be taught to run and could ultimately participate in athletic activities again depending on their strength and motivation. The prosthesis needed for above-the-knee amputation weighs more than a below-the-knee amputation. Energy for ambulating with an above-the-knee amputation require 60 to 100%. Energy for ambulating with a below-the-knee amputation require 10 to 40%.

### Care of the stump

A person must learn correct and safe care for their stump. Because a leg prosthesis is intended for walking it should be removed during bed time. At bedtime, the stump should be inspected thoroughly with a skin inspection mirror to ensure you inspect every angle for possible redness or sore development. It should also be washed with mild soap and warm water, dried thoroughly and if recommended dusted with talcum powder.

If visible problems occur, you should treat the problem and if severe contact your health professional. Some simple remedies may include:

- Broken Skin: Do not wear the prosthesis until the wound has healed and see a doctor
- Dry Skin: Apply lanolin or lotion to the stump
- Inflamed Skin: Remove the irritant immediately and notify your Doctor or Physical Therapist
- Excessive Sweating: Apply an unscented antiperspirant

A sock and or liner is worn between the prosthesis and the skin to decrease friction and pressure. The sock and liner should be washed every day, with mild soap may be used to clean the inside of the socket. Prostheses are typically not waterproof. If any portion of the prosthesis gets wet then it must be dried immediately and thoroughly. Heat like a blow-dryer and such heat generating devices should not be used to dry the prosthesis.

This and more will be part of the education you receive during your stay with NeuLife. All the specialty NeuLife staff will educate you on the process and care of your stump.

Service Provider	Key Contact(s)	Roles and Responsibilities
Hanger Inc.	<b>Bruce W. Hall, Jr.</b> (352) 357-0764 Phone (352) 357-2728 Fax <a href="http://www.hanger.com">www.hanger.com</a> 601 Mount Homer Road Eustis FL, 32726	To provide Prosthetic, and Orthotic services for NeuLife clients as medically necessary.
South Beach Orthotics and Prosthetics	<b>Vicky Mendez, LP</b> (407) 951-6601 Cell (888) 972-7017 Fax <a href="mailto:vmendez@southbeachoandp.com">vmendez@southbeachoandp.com</a>	To provide Prosthetic and Orthotic services for NeuLife clients as medically necessary.
Saunders Prosthetics & Orthotics Group, LLC	<b>Susan Sanders</b> (352) 259-8209 Phone (352) 259-8209 fax <a href="http://www.saunderspando.com">www.saunderspando.com</a>  761 County Road 466 Lady Lake, FL 32159  265 W. Hwy 50 Clermont, FL 34711	To provide Pedorthics, Prosthetics, Orthotics, Post Mastectomy supplies, and compression garments
Lake County Foot Clinic	<b>Dr. James Rotella</b> (352) 589-1335 629 S Grove Street Eustis, Florida 32726	Foot care services
Advanced Behavioral Health Sexual Counseling, Smoking Cessation, Substance Abuse/Addiction, PTSD, Coping Strategies Following Traumatic Injury, Psychiatric Medication Management	<b>Dr. Luis Torres</b> Psychiatrist  <b>Jerry Phillips</b> Certified Addiction Specialist  1799 Salk Ave. Tavares, FL 32778 (342) 742-8300 <a href="http://www.advancedbehavioralhealth.com">www.advancedbehavioralhealth.com</a>	Sexual Counseling, Smoking Cessation, Substance Abuse/Addiction, PTSD, Coping Strategies Following Traumatic Injury, Psychiatric Medication Management, Family/Group Counseling
Life Streams Behavioral Facility	(844) 921-4428 404 Webster Street Leesburg, FL 34748	Inpatient Psychiatric Center

Therapists will identify all equipment and supplies required in the treatment of clients. In cases where there is an external case manager, he or she will contact experts as needed outside NeuLife. If there is no external case manager and there is a need for outside experts, NeuLife Therapists will contact a NeuLife vendor. This process will take place during the appropriate timeframe as deemed necessary by client's Physician.

NeuLife has licensed and certified vendors who are equipped and skilled to provide

- Durable Medical Equipment
- Adaptive Devices
- Medical Supplies

### **Pain**

After an arm or leg amputation, people may feel pain that seems to be originating in the amputated extremity. This pain's medical term is phantom pain. This pain often subsides over time. For many people, phantom pain is more common when the prosthesis is not being worn. Some people experience phantom limb sensation; this is painless feeling that seems like the person is still able to feel the amputated extremity as if it is still attached. Phantom limb sensation is more common than phantom limb pain. Notify your doctor and Physical Therapist if you experience this so that they can help you through this stage of limb loss.



## Support Groups for Amputees

Group Name	Group Location	Contact Person	Number	Email	URL
Amputees Together Inc	5311 East Fletcher Ave Tampa, FL 33617-1147	Courtney Carroll	(888) 552-2555	courtney@wcbl.com	<a href="http://amputeestogether.org">amputeestogether.org</a>
Amputees for Life: Hospice of Palm Beach County	5300 East Ave West Palm Beach, FL 33407	Andrew Marchetti	(561) 965-2321	ampsforlife@webtv.net	<a href="http://gopbi.com/groups/amps4life/">gopbi.com/groups/amps4life/</a>
Save a leg Save a Life	1. A Leg Up Jacksonville, FL			alegup@savealeg savealife.org	<a href="http://savealegsavealife.org">savealegsavealife.org</a>
UASA	P.O. BOX 4277 Winter Park FL 32793-4277	Jay Miller	(407) 478-2920	uasa@oandp.com	<a href="http://oandp.com">oandp.com</a>
Bay Pines VA Amputee Support Group	10000 Bay Pines Blvd (117) Bay Pines, FL 33744	Diane Sosa	(727) 398-6661		
Amputees For Life!	PO Box 542063 West Palm Beach, FL 33454-2063	Andrew Marchetti	(561) 357-1247	amputeesforlife @yahoo.com	<a href="http://amputee-life.org">amputee-life.org</a>
Florida Amputee Support Team, Inc.	P O Box 120156 Ft Lauderdale, FL 33312	Gayle O'Barr	(954) 587-4469	gayle@netdor.com  floridaamputee@gmail.com	<a href="http://floridaamputee.com">floridaamputee.com</a>



## Famous Amputees

There are several people that are famous not only for their accomplishments, but also because of the fact they are amputees. Famous amputees are musicians, athletes, models, and many others that are well-known because of their abilities. For many amputees, their disability has not slowed them down in their goal of achieving their dreams. These people provide a role model and a source of encouragement for others who are also facing a limb disability.

- **Amputee Online:** A list of several well-known amputees that are athletes or involved in sports. [http://www.amputee-online.com/amputee/professional\\_amp.html](http://www.amputee-online.com/amputee/professional_amp.html)
- **Disabled World:** A directory of many famous people that are amputees. <http://www.disabled-world.com/artman/publish/famous-amputees.shtml>
- **Tom Whittaker:** Homepage of the mountaineer amputee who climbed Mt. Everest. <http://www.tomwhittaker.com/>
- **Heather Mills:** Website of the famous amputee, providing links and information for those affected by limb loss. <http://www.heathermills.org/help.php>

## Resources for Parents of Child Amputees

For the parent of a child amputee, there may be difficulties with managing the care and support of their child. Many parents feel isolated because of their child's disability and feel they cannot connect with others who do not share similar circumstances. Other parents have questions or face financial complications and do not know who to contact. For parents of child amputees, there are numerous networks and resources available for information and support in the care of their child.

- **Association of Children's Prosthetic-Orthotic Clinics:** An organization of professionals dedicated to providing information and care for children with limb loss and orthopedic disabilities. (<http://www.acpoc.org/>)
- **Helping Hand Foundation:** Support and information for families of children with upper limb differences. <http://www.helpinghandsgroup.org/>
- **Limb Differences:** Online resources, practical information, and support for families and friends of children with limb differences. <http://limbdifferences.org/>

## General Amputation Resources

Amputees or those facing the possibility of surgery may have questions or uncertainties about their situation. They may not be aware of what their options are when facing surgery, rehabilitation, or prosthetic treatment. There are a number of support groups and publications available to educate those who have questions about amputation. For those that are looking for help and guidance, there are numerous resources available.

- **Life Without Limits:** Advice and information for amputees, their families, and careers. <http://www.dorset-ortho.com/information-amputation.php>
- **The Barr Foundation:** Testimonials, resources, and financial assistance for those affected by amputation. <http://www.oandp.com/resources/organizations/barr/history/>
- **Ertl Reconstruction:** Stories, articles, and medical guidance for amputees. <http://www.ertlreconstruction.com/>
- **Amputation Overview:** Facts about amputation, the surgical procedure, prosthetics, and rehabilitation. <http://www.netwellness.org/healthtopics/amputation/overview.cfm>

## Associations and Organizations for Amputees

Various organizations are available whose purpose is to educate others about amputation. These associations provide education through articles and research in the areas of technology and development. They are also a medium for professionals working in the areas of therapy and rehabilitation to gain useful educational credits and learning experiences. Associations and organizations for amputees are useful resources for those seeking help and support.

- **Amputee Coalition of America:** An organization empowering those with limb loss to achieve their full potential through education, support, and advocacy. <http://www.amputee-coalition.org/>
- **Limbless Association:** A leading UK charity for those affected by limb loss, their families, and the professionals who care for them. <http://www.limbless-association.org/>
- **Wiggle Your Toes:** An association providing information and community involvement for those affected by limb loss. <http://www.wiggleyourtoes.org/>

## Newsgroups and Communities for Amputees

- Newsgroups and communities that are available for amputees are places that help those affected by limb loss to meet and connect with others in similar circumstances. They are useful outlets of support and bonding with others through possibly difficult situations. Newsgroups can teach those affected about new and upcoming therapies in the field of rehabilitation and prosthetics. They are a valuable resource for those affected by limb loss and amputation.
- **ActiveAmp:** An online connected community for active amputees. <http://www.activeamp.org/>
- **National Amputation Foundation:** Providing assistance, support, and funding for both military and civilian amputees. <http://www.nationalamputation.org/>
- **National Amputee Golf Association:** A membership of amputee golfers playing in tournaments and cities across the United States. <http://www.nagagolf.org/>







# NeuLife™

Residential Post-Acute Programs

2725 Robie Avenue, Mount Dora, Florida 32757

NeuLife is privately owned and operated and not affiliated with any company or organization. AL12406 and TL70090977

©2016 NeuLife. All rights reserved. 1/16

