

Life After Amputation: Recovery & Mobility

Rise
BIONICS



This booklet is designed to help you understand what lies ahead and feel more confident about the next steps in your journey. Life may look different now, but with the right information and support, moving forward is possible.

If you have questions, need more information about prosthetic devices, or would like to connect with medical professionals or other amputees, support is available. You are not alone.

DISCLAIMER

This guide provides general information intended to support you. Every individual's recovery and medical needs are different. Always follow the advice of your doctor, physiotherapist, and prosthetist for care and treatment specific to your condition.

This booklet is meant to complement professional medical guidance and should not be used as a substitute for medical advice.

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The First Steps Forward



If you have recently had an amputation, it is natural to feel unsure about what comes next. You may wonder how this happened or whether you will be okay.

Feelings of anger, fear, sadness, or wanting to give up are common. All of these feelings are valid.

This amputation does not have to define you. Healing takes time and involves both your body and your emotions. While the process can feel exhausting, moving forward is possible.

Frequently asked questions

Stories from people who made it through

Advice on recovery, both physical and emotional

Tips on choosing and living with a Prosthesis

Questions

Our Patients Ask Us

What is a prosthesis?

A prosthesis is an artificial device that replaces an arm, leg, hand, or foot. It's made to help a person move, work, or live more comfortably and independently after amputation or limb loss.

Will I be okay?

Yes. We know this might feel impossible right now, but we've seen hundreds of amputees build full, happy and active lives again. Some have run marathons, some have danced at their weddings, some have climbed mountains. Many return to their careers, pursue new ones, or continue being active, present parents. Your journey will be your own, but it can absolutely be a rich and fulfilling one.

Can I return to work with an artificial leg?

In most cases, yes. Depending on your surgery and recovery, you may need some adjustments or training, but an amputation doesn't have to stop you from working.

Will I be able to enjoy my favourite activities again?

Absolutely. With the right prosthesis, you can have agility, flexibility, and freedom of movement. Whether it's morning walks or dancing at a celebration — it's possible.

Is there a community I can connect with?

Yes. Talking to other amputees who've been where you are can make a huge difference. We can help you connect with a supportive community. You can refer to the last page for more details and QR code.

Why choose an artificial leg over crutches?

Long-term crutch use can cause irreversible shoulder damage and limit your mobility. An artificial leg, on the other hand, helps distribute your weight evenly, reduces strain on your body, and restores freedom of movement. It supports not just your physical health but also your overall quality of life — making it easier to work, travel, care for your family, and enjoy the activities that matter to you.

Once I get a prosthesis, am I set for life?

Not quite. Your residual limb can change shape, especially in the first six months. And factors like weight management or diabetes can affect stump size. We highly recommend annual service/checkup.

Do I need to come back after I get my prosthesis?

Yes. A routine check up once a year keeps your artificial leg in good condition, ensures it fits comfortably, and helps your doctor catch any issues early.

Stories of Impact



Shalini

In 2012, Shalini Saraswathi's life changed overnight. A rare bacterial infection left her as a quadruple amputee following the loss of her limbs. Faced with unimaginable adversity, Shalini embraced her new reality and began using prosthetics, determined to reclaim her independence.

What started as a way to stay fit soon became a passion for running. After completing the TCS 10K, Shalini was hooked. She trained hard and went on to become a National Para Athlete, winning gold and silver at the National Para Games and holding the Asian record as the fastest woman on blades in the T62 category. "Running changed my life. From being nobody in sports to being able to run for my country has been absolutely life-changing."

Beyond the track, Shalini is supported by a close, loving family and has built a successful career, working with multinational companies, giving motivational talks, and now working at Rise Bionics.



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Anbu

Anbu, an agriculturalist from Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore District, is a loving husband and a father of two children. He has spent much of his life working the land. In his school days, an accident led him down a road of multiple surgeries.

Unfortunately, none of them were successful, leaving him with a lasting issue in his calf muscle. As time passed, his condition worsened, and eventually, he was diagnosed with cancer. The doctors advised an amputation, a turning point that would forever change Anbu's life.

While his life changed dramatically in some ways, he found strength in returning to his day-to-day activities. "I miss the little things, like going to amusement parks and playing water games," he shares. "But in my everyday life, not much is different. I still ride my scooter, I still farm. It's like my artificial leg is just another part of my body."



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Javed

In 1997, Javed Ahmad Tak was paralysed after being shot in the spine. After three years confined to bed, he slowly found his way back by teaching children from his home. What began as a small act of resilience grew into the Zaiba Aapa Institute of Inclusive Education, which today provides free education to over 200 children with disabilities in Srinagar. For his extraordinary social work, Javed was awarded the Padma Shri in 2020.

In 2023, following a cancer diagnosis and the amputation of both his legs, daily life became even more challenging. Referred to Rise Bionics, Javed was fitted with a highly customised assistive solution, including a modified wheelchair.

Now able to sit upright comfortably for the first time since his surgery, Javed is back where he belongs—teaching, guiding, and working closely with his students—continuing his life's work with renewed independence and dignity.



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Rupa

Rupa Prasanna Desai, an industrial engineering graduate from North Karnataka, has always been a go-getter—independent, resilient, and deeply committed to her work. With over 18 years in the garment sector, she built a life rooted in purpose, family, and self-reliance.

After a life-altering accident led to the amputation of both her legs, Rupa faced a long and difficult road. But with the support of her family and her own determination, she began rebuilding her life step by step. Today, on her four-inch stubbies, Rupa is walking again—moving through her days with confidence, returning to work, exercising, and reclaiming her independence.



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The Days After Surgery



In the first days after surgery, it's normal to feel a mix of emotions—relief that the worst is behind you, but also worry, sadness, or even frustration about what comes next.

Your body will need rest and gentle care as the surgical site heals. You'll work closely with your medical team to manage pain, prevent infection, and support recovery. At the same time, your mind will need attention too. Give yourself space to process and ask for support when you need it.



Scan the QR code for video guides.

Bandaging Bandaging your stump after surgery helps control swelling, shape it for a better prosthetic fit, and support healing. It also improves blood circulation and reduces discomfort, making the transition to using an artificial limb smoother and more comfortable.

Exercise Exercise is an essential part of recovery. Regular exercise maintains muscle strength and joint mobility. With guidance from your rehabilitation doctor or physiotherapist, daily exercises will help you heal faster, stay confident, and build strength for the road ahead.

Good exercise tips:

Start slow and easy, increase repetition gradually as you get stronger.

It's natural to feel pain in the beginning but it should subside over time. Consult your doctor if pain persists.

Skincare Wash your limb daily with warm, soapy water and dry it well. Showering at night helps with a better fit in the morning.

Do not soak or shave your limb.

Stump size may change during the day. Sweating can loosen the fit. Keep cotton stump socks handy to manage volume.

Check your limb every day for redness, swelling, blisters, or wounds. If you notice any of these, stop using the device and contact your prosthetist or doctor.

Emotional Healing Just as your body needs time to heal, so does your mind. Emotional recovery takes patience and effort, but it is possible.

Give yourself time. Healing does not happen overnight. Some days will feel harder than others. When they do, remind yourself of the life you are rebuilding and keep moving forward, one day at a time.

Be mindful of your self-talk. Feeling sad or discouraged is natural, but staying in self-pity can slow recovery. When this happens, reach out to someone you trust or refocus on thoughts that support you.

Stay connected. Spend time with people who encourage you, and consider connecting with other amputees who have faced similar challenges and built fulfilling lives.

Acknowledge progress. Every step forward, physical or emotional, matters and deserves recognition.

Reflection **Write down a few encouraging truths such as:** I am healing. I am stronger than yesterday. I am not alone. Read them out loud when negative thoughts arise.

Keep a simple progress journal. Each evening, note one thing you did for yourself, whether it was an exercise completed, a difficult moment managed, or a well deserved rest.

The Expected Timeline



Your Recovery

Over Time

Everybody heals differently. This timeline is a general guide only. Recovery may progress faster or slower depending on your health and individual circumstances.

As your body and activity levels change over time, regular maintenance, adjustments, and occasional part replacements are to be expected.

Weeks 0-2	Weeks 2-8	Weeks 9-16	Months 4-6	Months 6-12	Months 12-18	Months 18-24	After 18-24 Months
Wound Care	Swelling Reduces	Stump Heals / First Temporary Prosthesis	Aligning the Prosthesis	Adjusting the Socket	Strength Building	Stump Stabilizes	Long-Term Device
Focus on healing the surgical site, managing pain, and preventing infection. Gentle movement and rest as advised by your medical team.	Continue bandaging and physiotherapy. Begin light exercises to maintain flexibility and circulation. Refer to QR code in page 18.	As your stump heals, its size and shape will keep changing, so it's best to start with a more affordable prosthesis since the socket may need to be changed 2-3 times. Plan for the cost.	Begin walking practice under the guidance of a physiotherapist. Focus on posture and even weight distribution rather than speed, and visit your prosthetist regularly for check-ups and adjustments.	When transitioning from one socket to another, some temporary discomfort or mild blistering is normal. If you notice blisters or ongoing pain, let your prosthetist know so they can make timely adjustments.	Exercises to strengthen arms, legs, core, and back. Gradual increase in walking distance and confidence. Fine-tune prosthesis fit and function as your skills improve.	Stump shape and size become mostly stable. Consider long-term prosthesis options based on lifestyle and needs.	When changing from one socket to another it is normal to have some discomfort or blistering as you adjust to the new socket.

Your Device Journey



Choosing the Right Device

It's best to explore prosthetic options only after your doctor gives you clearance and your stump has fully healed. This is usually 2–4 months after surgery, and 4–6 months for many diabetic patients.

Don't rush to get a prosthesis before full healing of the stump. Getting a prosthesis too early can cause the wound to reopen once you put weight on it. With proper care, physiotherapy, exercises, and regular bandaging, your stump will heal well and be ready for a comfortable, safe fitting.

There is no single 'best' prosthesis—only the one that best fits your life, and each device is different.

Lifestyle	Some devices focus on stability and everyday use, while others are designed for active lifestyles or sports. Your prosthetist will guide you through options based on your daily activities, comfort, and performance needs.
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Weight	Don't stress about the weight of the prosthesis early on. A well-fitting socket matters far more—when the fit is right, the weight won't bother you. Focus first on comfort and learning to walk well; lighter or advanced options can come later, once you're steady and confident.
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Parts and Appearance	Prosthetic components vary in function and cost, and many devices can be customised in appearance so you feel confident wearing them.
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Budgeting for Your Device

Choosing a prosthesis is not only a medical decision, but a financial one as well. Understanding the costs early can help you plan with confidence and reduce unexpected stress later.

Budgeting is not just about the first device. It also means thinking ahead and preparing for how your needs may change as your body heals, adapts, and becomes stronger over time. With the right planning, you can make choices that balance comfort, function, and long term affordability.

Initial cost	Around half your budget goes toward the device itself. A higher price doesn't always mean a better fit. Comfort and function come first.
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Maintenance	The remaining cost covers socket changes (about twice in the first 18-24 months), component replacements, and regular adjustments.
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Planning Ahead	Ask your prosthetist for clear cost estimates. Starting with a more affordable option is often wiser while your stump is still changing, with upgrades possible later.
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Fitting the New Device

Getting a prosthesis is not a single appointment. It's a continuous unfolding process designed to help you move safely, comfortably, and with confidence.

From understanding your body and daily needs to learning how to walk again, each stage builds on the last, giving you the time and support to adapt at your own pace.

Assessment

Your prosthetist will examine the shape of your stump, muscle strength, and overall mobility and prescribe options of device configurations.

Measurement

Accurate measurements are taken to create a custom socket that fits securely and comfortably.

Fitting

Once the prosthesis is made, you'll attend a fitting session where the prosthesis is adjusted for comfort and function. A good fit helps prevent pain and skin issues.

Gait Training

You'll learn to walk safely with guidance on balance, posture, and weight shift. A simple tip: keep your head up. Looking down can throw off your balance. Use mirrors to check and improve your walking.

Maintenance

Regular check-ups are essential, especially in the first two years. Servicing once a year helps keep your device comfortable, aligned, and working well.

Caring for Your Device

Caring for your prosthetic leg is just as important as learning to use it. Small, everyday habits: how you manage stump changes, move your body, and maintain your device — make a big difference to comfort, safety, and long-term health.

Stump Size Management

Regular maintenance: Your stump will change in size and shape, especially in the early years. Servicing your leg at least once a year helps keep the fit comfortable.

Diet and exercise: A steady diet and routine activity help keep stump size stable. Big weight changes can affect fit and cause discomfort.

Stump socks: Socks of different thicknesses help manage daily size changes. Your stump may swell after a shower and shrink with sweating, so carrying extra socks can help you stay comfortable.

Gait Training

Walking with a prosthesis can feel unfamiliar at first. Proper gait training helps you use your leg safely and confidently.

Gait training teaches you to distribute weight evenly between both legs, reducing strain on your joints, back, and hips.

Start in a safe environment, such as between parallel bars, with supervision to prevent falls.

You'll also learn how to fall safely using mats and pillows, skills that prepare you for real-life situations.

Maintenance

Routine maintenance keeps your prosthesis comfortable, safe, and working well.

You may need a socket replacement once or twice in the first year or two, so it's important to plan for these costs early.

While prosthetic legs are mechanical, they require care. With gentle use and proper upkeep, your leg can last longer than the typical two-year lifespan recommended by the International Standards Organisation (ISO). Rough use, however, can shorten its life.

Do's & Don'ts with Your Device

Do's

Keep your stump/limb and device clean at all times.

Check that the socket fits correctly and isn't causing wounds.

Stay in regular contact with your prosthetist, and report any discomfort or issues immediately.

Regularly inspect the device for cracks, unusual sounds, or wounds on your stump. Ensure all joints are functioning.

Don'ts

Do not use chemicals to clean your prosthesis, as they may damage it.

Don't bathe or shower with your prosthesis on (unless your prosthetist has specifically recommended a water-resistant device for this)

Avoid exposing the device to rain or seawater

Do not wear the prosthesis if the socket or any component feels loose or damaged.

A Guide for Caregivers



Your Role as a Caregiver

Being a caregiver can be deeply rewarding, but it can also be challenging. While your loved one may need help at times, they will also want independence.

Encourage them to do what they can for themselves, celebrate their progress, and provide reassurance when they need it.

Do's

Let them grieve; it's a natural part of the healing process.

Offer help in practical ways, but respect their autonomy.

Surround them with supportive, uplifting people.

Don'ts

Don't assume they always need your help—allow space for independence.

Don't worry about what others think; focus on positivity and progress.

Don't let other people's opinions limit what your loved one can do.

Caring for someone else can be deeply meaningful, but it can also be physically and emotionally demanding. When you're focused on supporting another person, it's easy to put your own needs last. Taking care of your health, rest, and mental well-being isn't selfish—it's necessary. Remember, looking after yourself is part of looking after them.

Make time for yourself

Take regular breaks to rest and recharge.

Look after your body

Gentle movement, balanced meals, and staying hydrated.

Stay connected

Talk to friends, family, or support groups.

Know your limits

Ask for help, set boundaries, and share responsibilities when needed.

You Don't Have to Do This Alone

Support exists at every stage of your journey.

There are people and resources ready to support you, from medical professionals to fellow amputees who understand what you are going through. Being part of a community can offer reassurance, shared experience, and practical guidance as you move forward.

At Rise Bionics, we host Rise Together, a community where people with physical challenges, caregivers, and professionals in this space can connect, share, and support one another through events, workshops, and informal meetups.



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Step Forward



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