

*the Ultimate*  
**Replacement  
Prosthesis**  
CHEAT SHEET

Have you recently started struggling with your prosthesis? Do you find yourself wondering if it is time for a replacement prosthesis? If so, consider this short guide your ultimate replacement prosthesis cheat sheet. We'll cover the common symptoms of prosthesis issues, common reasons you may need a new prosthesis, and more.

# Poor Fit & Associated Symptoms

Perhaps the most common issue with prosthetic limbs is poor fit. Whether you've never experienced a good fit or poor fit has slowly crept up on you, the symptoms can be debilitating. It can start simply enough—maybe you just feel a little off balance—but can quickly spiral out of control to the point that you're struggling to make it several hours without feeling fatigued.

## There's no reason for you to continue to suffer.

It is important that you avoid waiting to discuss any potential problems with your prosthetist. While some fit issues are minor and represent no immediate danger, others can quickly become more severe and cause significant pain and lasting damage to your body. Any issue, no matter how minor, is worth at least a quick discussion with a qualified prosthetist—there is no reason to continue to suffer. It may seem like a hassle, but often the longer you wait, the more severe the issue becomes and it may take longer to fix the issue. Continuing to suffer doesn't do anyone any favors.



## Poor Fit Symptom #1: **Skin Irritation**

Skin irritation, such as burning or itching, is an unfortunate, but common ailment affecting amputees. Irritation can often be controlled with the proper socket fit and spacer socks to accommodate for volume fluctuation, but sometimes this just isn't enough. If you find that you're having a serious problem with skin irritation, it is important to visit a qualified prosthetist to find a fix and the source of your issues before they become a serious medical concern.

## Poor Fit Symptom #2: **Pain**

Pain is another important warning sign of prosthesis issues. Back pain or pain in the residual limb are signs that something may be wrong. It could be a simple alignment problem or a more serious issue, in either case you should make a point to get checked out and correct the source of your pain before serious complications arise.

## Poor Fit Symptom #3: Mobility Issues



Poor balance and instability are warning signs that something isn't quite right. They're usually some of the first indicators of fit or alignment problems, but they are often overlooked until more serious issues like pain or skin irritation pop up. If you suddenly feel like your prosthesis just isn't moving correctly or maybe it feels unbalanced, it's time to have a conversation with your prosthetist. You may just need an adjustment, but it could be the result of a more serious problem with your prosthesis, which may necessitate replacing part or all of your prosthetic limb to correct the issue.

## Poor Fit Symptom #4: Fatigue

Fatigue is typically the result of mobility and other fit issues. You may not even be aware of the underlying issues, but if you find you tire much faster than normal or you just don't feel up to tasks you regularly enjoy, it may be time to stop by your prosthetist's office. Depending on the age of your prosthesis and the time since your amputation, you may only need a simple tweak or adjustment, but it is also possible a replacement prosthesis or replacement components are necessary. In either case, your prosthetist should be able to correct the issues and have you back in tip-top shape.



# Other issues that require a replacement prosthesis

## Your prosthesis feels limiting

In many of the above cases, issues you're experiencing may dictate replacement in order to correct your fit problem. In the case of feeling limited by your prosthesis, you may find that your prosthesis fits fine, but it just isn't designed to do something you want to do. Maybe you'd like to start running or golfing; it takes radically different systems to power through a 5k run compared to launching your ball off the tee on the green. If you add a new hobby to the mix, it's important not to use prosthesis that isn't designed for that activity—you may damage your prosthesis or cause yourself pain or injury. Take the time to discuss the hobby with your prosthetist and find a prosthesis with the proper configuration of components that fits you well and will allow you to perform your desired activity at the optimal level—you'll be glad you did.

## Something is broken

Regardless of any of the above, if you can see something is clearly broken, you need to visit your prosthetist to discuss your options for replacement immediately. Don't try to stick it out or just repair it yourself, because you risk injuring your residual limb and potentially causing yourself a great deal of pain.

## How do you know when it is time to replace your prosthesis?

As a general rule of thumb, you should consider a replacement prosthesis whenever you're having issues that a simple adjustment can't correct, the prosthesis seems to be limiting your level of activity, or there are obviously broken components.

# We can help with any phase of your amputation

Because of Premier Prosthetic Center's relationship with Premier Surgical Associates, Premier's surgeons often consult with us pre-amputation to discuss a patient's particular case and the best options for them. We also have many patients come to Premier Prosthetic Center for a routine check-up, even years after their amputation. The bottom line is, we can help with any phase of your amputation—from preoperative to 50 years down the road, you can benefit from a consultation with our team at Premier Prosthetic Center. If you're suffering from poor fit or other issues and you're wondering if it is time to talk to a prosthetist, take our free self assessment. All it takes is a few minutes to answer some questions and based on your answers we'll let you know if it is time for you to contact our team at Premier Prosthetic Center of Knoxville and let our highly-qualified staff create a prosthesis for your unique lifestyle with our specialized design and fitting process.

**Get started on your  
self assessment now!**

**Time for a prosthetic replacement? Give Premier  
Prosthetic Center a call today at (865) 474-7096  
or schedule a free consultation online.**

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