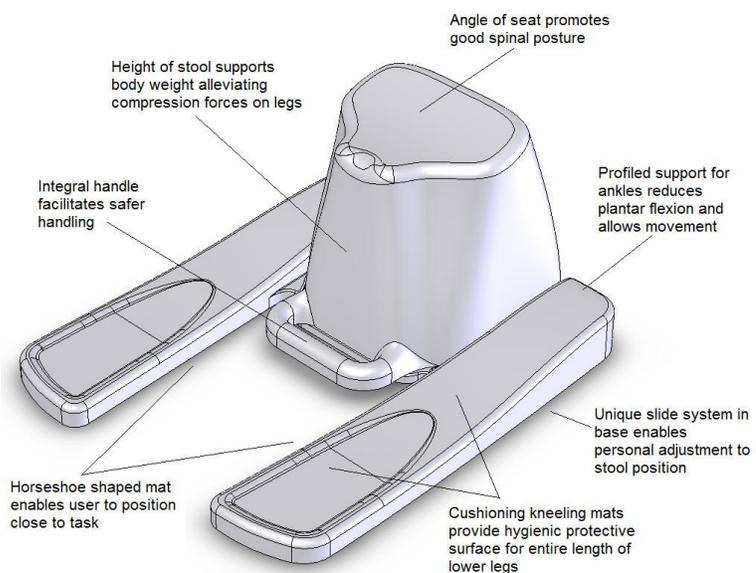


Information and Guidelines for Use

IMPORTANT - Please read carefully and retain for future reference

The **ErgoKneeler™** a dynamic kneeling system that can provide comfort, support and ease of movement across a range of low working positions for people who undertake tasks at a low height



About the ErgoKneeler™

The **ErgoKneeler™** is a uniquely profiled kneeling pad and stool integrated into a single piece of equipment. The ergonomic design alleviates the compression forces and postural discomfort associated with kneeling or squatting and promotes good spinal posture. To facilitate optimum posture and comfort for the individual, the position of the stool is adjustable.

Introducing a new dynamic approach to low height working, the **ErgoKneeler™** reduces the need for prolonged static postures by enabling the user free movement across a range of functional and balanced low working positions whilst carrying out a task. Frequent movement and changes to position throughout the duration of a task helps alleviate the damaging musculoskeletal stresses and pressures that can result from static kneeling or squatting.

Moulded in sealed polyurethane foam, the **ErgoKneeler™** has smooth lines and is easy to clean. To promote infection prevention an active antimicrobial additive is incorporated throughout the foam and within the product's tough lacquer coating. The product labelling and the specialist areas providing slip resistance on the underside are also antimicrobial.

Used in accordance with the **ErgoKneeler™** 'Information and Guidelines for Use', the **ErgoKneeler™** aims to promote the comfort and musculoskeletal health of nurses, midwives, podiatrists, therapists, educational staff, care staff or anyone who undertakes tasks at a low height.

The ErgoKneeler™ is designed, developed and manufactured entirely in the United Kingdom

Why low working can be a problem

It has long been recognised that low working postures such as kneeling and squatting are very uncomfortable and potentially damaging. The longer such positions are sustained and the more frequently they are adopted, then the greater the risk of resulting injury and cumulative damage. Research now shows that regular, prolonged static kneeling or squatting increases the risk of developing osteoarthritis of the knees at an earlier age.

For further information, please visit www.ergokneeler.co.uk

Where possible, low height working should be avoided but sometimes it may be the only way that certain tasks can be carried out. For many people in many industries, repetitive and prolonged low working postures are an inherent aspect of their daily work.

How the ErgoKneeler™ can help

The **ErgoKneeler™** provides an option for managing the musculoskeletal stresses and discomfort arising from unavoidable low height working providing its use is ergonomically assessed as suitable for task and user. **The ergonomic design:**

- supports the knees and ankles away from their end of range position, reducing stress on muscles and joint structures. The support to ankles also frees the feet to move during kneeling, promoting circulation.
- supports body weight, relieving the compression forces on the joints and tissues in the lower limbs.
- cushions the knees against the hard floor. The long mats provide protection and a clean kneeling surface for the entire length of the lower legs.
- positions the pelvis to promote natural spinal curves, reducing both static muscle tension and the stressing of spinal structures. To achieve optimum spinal posture, the task must be undertaken at around the waist height of the user. For example, a limb support or low stool can position a client's leg at a suitable height for a nurse to carry out leg dressings.
- facilitates positioning of the task close to user, reducing the need to stoop or overreach.
- enables movement between full kneeling, half kneeling (alternating sides) and sitting, the user being able to maintain a secure, balanced low working position throughout the task. Frequent changes of position helps maintain flexibility of soft tissues, promotes circulation and reduces the build up of pressure through the knees that results from prolonged static kneeling.



Range of Positions

Full kneeling



**Half kneeling
(alternating sides)**



Sitting



The user can also move freely into high kneeling or high half kneeling, enabling a very effective and practical range of reach. If occasionally reaching to a lower level or the floor, better spinal curves may be maintained by pivoting forwards from the hips. **Please note:** work carried out at very low or floor level will increase pressure and stressing through the knees and should be of short duration only.

High kneeling



High half kneeling



Pivot from hips



Preparation for Use

IMPORTANT – Please note! The ways in which people move, the positions they can adopt and levels of flexibility vary according to the capabilities of the individual. Prior to use, it is essential that ergonomic assessment is undertaken to ensure suitability of the **ErgoKneeler™** for that individual. **The individual must:**

- be fit to move and handle the **ErgoKneeler™** and able to follow good handling practice and techniques.
- be able to easily and safely lower onto and rise from the **ErgoKneeler™**.
- be able to easily and comfortably adopt and move between the different positions on the **ErgoKneeler™**.
- have information, knowledge and understanding of the correct use of the **ErgoKneeler™** and follow the **ErgoKneeler™ 'Information and Guidelines for Use'**.
- be able to assess and organise the task to allow for changes to their position and enable close as possible working.

Should an individual experience discomfort whilst using the ErgoKneeler™ they should immediately discontinue use. Employees should then report back to their employer

Lowering onto, positioning and rising from the ErgoKneeler™

How an individual can most safely lower onto or rise from the **ErgoKneeler™** should form part of the assessment for that individual; the following methods are intended as generic guidance only. **Please note:** particular care should always be taken when using on wet floors

Lowering – method 1

Stand within the open horseshoe area of the kneeling mats facing away from the stool. Slowly lower one knee onto the kneeling mat on that side, assuming a half kneeling position. Lowering may be controlled by placing hands on the forward knee. Once safely in half kneeling, flex the second knee and position similarly on the other side.

Lowering – method 2

Stand behind the **ErgoKneeler™** facing forwards. Bend knees sufficiently to place hands on top of the stool seat for support and carefully pivot forwards to lower knees directly onto kneeling mats.

Positioning

To ensure security of position, take care that knees are comfortably within the profiled edges of the kneeling mats and ankles are resting comfortably over the ankle supports, allowing feet to relax.

With weight off the seat, use the stool handle to slide the stool backwards or forwards until a comfortable sitting position with an upright pelvis and natural spinal curves is achieved.

DO NOT remain in full kneeling for more than a few minutes. Move into half kneeling and no matter how comfortable you may feel, continue to change position frequently throughout the duration of the task thereby limiting the amount of time that pressure is taken through either knee.

(See below – Avoid prolonged static kneeling)

Rising

In order to stand, move into high kneeling and bring one foot forwards to assume high half kneeling before pushing up into standing. Rising may be assisted by placing hands on the forward knee and pushing down as you stand.

Avoid prolonged static kneeling

IMPORTANT - Please Note! Prolonged static kneeling increases the risk of injury and cumulative damage, particularly to the knees. Frequent movement and change of position throughout a low working task helps alleviate the pressures and stresses that can cause injury and damage.

The ErgoKneeler™ is specifically designed to enable easy and frequent change of position between full kneeling, half kneeling (alternating sides) and sitting during unavoidable low working. It must be used accordingly and MUST NOT be used to prolong static kneeling.



Load Capacity, Handling and Storage

- User Load Capacity – 18stones (115kg)
- Approximate weight 4kg - within the HSE “Guideline Weights for Lifting and Lowering” providing that good manual handling principles are followed. Users are advised to follow their organisation’s Moving and Handling Policy, Training and Procedures when handling the **ErgoKneeler™**.
- The **ErgoKneeler™** is in its most ergonomic lifting and handling position when tipped onto its back. The handle then assumes a vertical position enabling the lift to be from mid-calf level rather than the floor. **The ErgoKneeler™ MUST ALWAYS be lifted by the handle, NOT by the stool or kneeling mats as this may cause damage to their structure.**
- To minimise moving and handling, store the **ErgoKneeler™** as close as reasonably practicable to the area of use. Community Health Trusts may find it more practical to issue an **ErgoKneeler™** to the home of a client for the duration of the treatment period as this will minimise the manual handling requirement for staff.
- As with all other low height equipment, due care must be taken when positioning the **ErgoKneeler™** in order to avoid trip/slip hazards.
- The foam kneeling mats of the **ErgoKneeler™** **MUST NOT be folded as this may cause damage to their structure.** Due care must be taken in storage and during transportation.



Infection Prevention, Cleaning and Maintenance

- **Infection Prevention:** As part of the moulding process, **TETRAMASS PLUS Antimicrobial Additive** is incorporated throughout the entire foam of the **ErgoKneeler™** and within the product’s tough lacquer coating. For further information about TETRAMASS PLUS Antimicrobial Additive please visit www.tetramass.co.uk/tetramass-plus/
- **Recommended Cleaning:** Regular warm soap and water wash and dry with clean cloth/paper towel. The ErgoKneeler™ must not be left immersed in water/fluids nor left sitting in wet/fluid conditions. In situations where washing is not practical, specialist TETRAMASS PLUS Antimicrobial Wipes are available from **Tetramass Ltd, 01604 781880, email info@tetramass.co.uk**
- **Maintenance:** For thorough cleaning, the stool and mat can be easily separated by releasing the bolts within the slide system; please note the position of the nylon sleeves. Care must be taken during re-assembly to ensure the nylon sleeves are correctly in place. The bolts should be fully tightened (do not force) and then released sufficiently to allow the slide system to operate smoothly.
- The **ErgoKneeler™** should be regularly inspected to ensure security of the bolts, free movement of the slide system and that there is no structural damage.



Spectrum Healthcare (UK) Ltd is grateful to the Yorkshire Back Exchange specialist Manual Handling and Back Care professionals who kindly reviewed the content of these Guidelines

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