FIPS Tips

for Successful Seating

Bowl Pack or Bag Pack?

Some therapists prefer to use the FIPS Bowl Packs in-house and take the FIPS Bag Packs on the road. Some prefer Bowls over Bags because the ingredients are easy to visually inspect and quality test. Some prefer Bags over Bowls because there is less cleanup, less waste, and the packaging is all-inclusive. It's up to you to decide what works best for you.

Use Oldest FIPS Units First

Every FIPS unit, whether it's a Bowl Pack or a Bag Pack, ships with a "Use By" label with a date of expiration stamped on it. Generally speaking, FIPS units have a shelf-life of about 9 months. Older units are just as good as newer units and should be used first for efficiency. All units need to be visually inspected about one day prior to use. If a unit has been sitting for a few weeks or months, it is a good idea to follow the "Winter Heating Tips." (See reverse side.) This is especially true if the units have been stored in a cool closet, basement, or air conditioned room or if it is winter. For any unit that has been sitting awhile, mix the ingredients thoroughly to achieve a good consistency. For Bowl Pack Polyol, scrape any sediment from the sides and bottom of the jug.

Spills & Splashes

It is important for everyone involved in the FIPS pour to be adequately protected from accidental spills and splashes. Protection can be as simple as wearing protective eyewear, protective clothing and latex gloves. The client should wear an extra layer of clothing, or should sit on a towel for protection from the heat generated by the foaming reaction (100-120 ℉). The client should also wear a shower cap to prevent any liquids splashing from the bowl or bag mix from getting in the hair.

Spilled liquids can be wiped up with absorbant materials, but splashes of mixed ingredients cure into a durable plastic foam that is a natural adhesive. It is harmless once cured, but extremely difficult to remove. Always mix the FIPS Bag or Bowl away from the client and seating assistants. If a FIPS Bowl unit is being used, place the bowl inside a larger box when mixing the chemicals. If mixing a Bag unit, stand and face away from others. This reduces the chance that anyone might be splashed with the liquid foam. Drop cloths should be used to protect the chair and floor from splashing. Thinner plastic can be used to cover the chair, but thicker plastic (such as a shower curtain) or a drop cloth work better on the floor because they create a more secure walking surface.

In the case of an accidental spill or splash, the following methods can be used to clean-up or remove the foam:

For foam stuck to skin or hair, apply baby oil or lotion, and allow it to sit for a while until the foam breaks down enough to be removed. Do not use solvents on the skin.

For jewelry or other metals, use a solvent to loosen the foam.

For foam splashes on clothing, you can cut away excess foam, but most residue and stains will be permanent. That is why it is important to wear protective clothing.

Proper Ventilation of the Molding Bag

After pouring the liquid mixture into the bag, the foaming reaction begins. During this process, warm carbon dioxide gases are generated. Direct the bag opening away from the client and others.

A simple filter can be easily constructed for those who want to achieve a zero-fume level. Place a damp, porous sponge or activated charcoal inside a tube roughly 2" in diameter and 4" long. After you have poured the liquids into the bag, gather the end of the bag around the tube and secure it with a rubber band.

Avoiding Hard Spots in the Cushion

Hard spots in a FIPS insert are generally caused by touching or poking the molding bag while the foam inside is rising. Excessive movement by the client can also cause hard spots to form. The foaming action is a delicate process. During the reaction, millions of tiny bubbles are forming and growing. Like soap bubbles, it doesn't take much to break or pop them. Pushing on the cushion surface causes the bubbles to collapse. Instead of a flexible, open-cell structure, a rigid, collapsed structure forms where the foam is touched. It is always a good idea to keep the client as still as possible once foaming begins. Sometimes the heat generated by the reaction creates a warm, comfortable, quieting effect which helps.

If no one has touched the foam during the reaction and the client has been still, yet there are still hard spots in the finished insert, improper mixing may be to blame. Cold, cloudy or crystallized Iso, or Polyol that hasn't been thoroughly mixed can be problematic. Heating the liquid ingredients in a hot water bath before pouring makes the liquids easier to mix. (See "Winter Heating Tips" on reverse side.) Also, be sure to mix for the time specified in the instructions, all the while visually checking the mixture for consistency.

Air Pockets in the Insert

Air pockets can form in FIPS inserts during the molding process. This happens when air gets trapped in the molding bag during the rise. The easiest solution is to poke a tiny hole in the bag using a sharp pencil or straight pin. This allows the air to escape and the foam to rise and fill the void. A small amount of liquid foam may seep through the hole. This is okay, just make sure it doesn't touch bare skin or other surfaces that need protecting.

Don't Forget to Remove the Molding Bag!

The cells open and expand, and the air molecules warm as the cushion rises during the molding process. The chemical reaction generates heat. After the cushion rise is complete, the air between the cells begins to cool and contract. It is very important to remove the plastic molding bag once the rise has finished (as soon as 10 minutes after the rise is complete). Air must be allowed to flow freely through the cushion to regulate the temperature of the contracting air. Leaving the molding bag on the cushion while it cures traps the air and results in a shrunken seat cushion that is smaller, firmer and not suitable for the client.

The plastic molding bag's only purpose is to provide a temporary container for the Liquid SunMate mixture while it is forming a solid cushion. Once the molding process is complete, the molding bag must be removed.

The molding bag should never be left on the insert to provide a waterproof layer. Not only is the molding bag inappropriate material for waterproofing, it detracts from the cushion's support properties. Always remove the molding bag before applying fabric or silicone waterproofing.

Tailbone or Back Relief

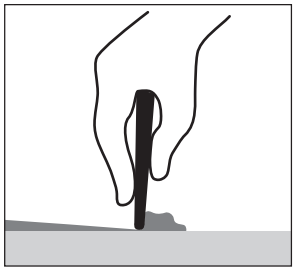
You can provide extra relief for the tailbone or other pressure-sensitive areas by cutting a hole directly in the FIPS insert beneath the sensitive area, and filling it with a 1" Pudgee patch. Pudgee is extremely soft with slide capabilities that virtually eliminate the friction caused by other surface textures. The cutout may also be left empty, to allow the tailbone to "float," or keep an area free from contact with any surface.

How To

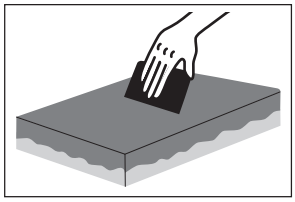
Waterproofing Tips

Here are a few ideas for a high quality finish:

1. Immediately after applying the second waterproof coating, add a little liquid dish soap to some water and splash it on the surface. Use your fingertips to rub it into the silicone in a circular motion. This will create a nice, smooth, glossy finish.
2. If you adhere a color or print fabric to your cushion, use a clear silicone to let the colors or patterns show through.
3. Use a pin or scissors to punch a tiny hole in an inconspicuous corner of the cushion. This will allow a place for air to escape when the cushion is compressed. Even though the silicone is flexible, and will not detract from the cushion's support capabilities, the small slit or hole will keep the silicone layer from trapping air which could cause bubbles which pull the waterproofing away from the cushion.
4. A small amout of dye may be added to white silicone to create a waterproof coating the color of your choice.
5. When applying the first thin layer of silicone, hold the spreader at a 90° angle. This ensures good penetration of the silicone into the cushion's cells. When applying the second thin layer, hold the spreader at a 45° angle. (See illustration.)



Applying the first coat of silicone. Hold the spreader in a vertical position.



Applying the second coat of silicone. Hold the spreader at a 45° angle.

FIPS Winter Climate Caution

Winter Heating Tips

As autumn progresses and the winter months approach, cold temperatures can affect the chemicals in the FIPS packs during shipping. Check the FIPS chemicals thoroughly the DAY BEFORE you plan to pour an insert. If the containers are cold, or the chemicals look thick, cloudy or crystallized, use the following heating instructions to bring the chemicals back to the appropriate state. This insures easier mixing, and the best cushion quality.

Crystallized Iso

As Iso gets colder, it begins to form tiny crystals which impede its ability to react. The damage is not permanent, so the Iso should not be discarded. Crystallization can be easily reversed by following these steps:

For Crystallized Bowl Pack Iso

1. **Loosen the lid** and place the bottle of Iso in a pot of water that has been heated to 120-150°F. Heating at this temperature dissolves the crystals, removing the cloudiness.
2. Leave the bottle in the water for 10-20 minutes, until the Iso clears.
3. Take the bottle out of the hot water bath. It must be allowed to **return to room temperature before using.**

For Crystallized Bag Pack Iso

Due to the foil packaging, you cannot see if the Iso in the Bag Pack has crystallized. During the winter season, it is always a good idea to soak the Iso section of the Bag Pack in a hot water bath before use. This insures chemical consistency.

To heat the Iso in the Bag Pack, simply follow the instructions "For Crystallized Bowl Pack Iso," submerging the Iso section of the bag in the hot water bath. Remember, the heated section must **return to room temperature before using.**

REMINDERS:
Never heat Iso, or any of the FIPS chemicals, in a microwave, over direct heat or over an open flame.

Always allow chemicals to return to room temperature before using.

Always inspect FIPS packs before pouring an insert.

Cold, Thick Polyol

The Polyol may also become cold and thick during shipping. By placing the Polyol container in a hot water bath, you can bring it back to a consistency which is easy to mix and will result in the best cushion quality. Just follow the instructions for heating the Bowl or Bag Pack Iso. Remember to let the heated chemical return to room temperature before using it.