



The Washington Post Features NFL Quarterback Alex Smith's Return to the Game with Custom Leg Brace From Hanger Clinic

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Oct. 16, 2020 - After suffering what some would call a career-ending injury during a game in 2018, Washington Football Team quarterback Alex Smith endured 17 limb salvage surgeries to repair his right tibia and fibula, resulting in permanent foot drop when his peroneal nerve had to be removed.

After working closely with Area Clinic Manager [Mike Muratore](#) at [Hanger Clinic in Bethesda, Maryland](#) for over a year, hundreds of hours of rehabilitation, and several custom [ankle foot orthoses \(AFOs\)](#), Smith returned to the field on Oct. 11 for the first time since his injury – something no NFL quarterback has been able to do before.

The Washington Post reporter Nicki Jhabvala details Smith's journey back to the field in her Oct. 15 article, "[The leg brace that allows Alex Smith to play football](#)." The story is scheduled to appear in the Post's print edition Sunday, Oct. 18.

Alex's road to recovery was not easy, and required a lot of experimentation and ingenuity from Muratore to determine how to help him reach his goals. After trying several different bracing options, Muratore knew Smith needed a device that was dynamic and lightweight, with the right mixture of flexibility and rigidity, so he could run and move successfully on the field.

"It's similar to what we would do for anyone else that had custom bracing. It's just for Alex...his activity goals are pretty unique and require a pretty unique solution," said Muratore. That solution ended up being a custom version of the [SpryStep Flex](#) made by Thuasne USA. Muratore continues to work with Thuasne to refine their designs, allowing Smith to have several different versions with varying thicknesses.

Alex's determination, love of the game and the unwavering support of his family, friends and healthcare team have helped him arrive where he is today. "From the day I met Alex until now, he's needed less and less support because he's just so strong...He's doing more than he probably should be able to," Muratore said. As Smith continues paving the way for other athletes, he has already proved to the world that nothing is impossible.

About Hanger Clinic: Hanger Clinic, a subsidiary of Hanger, Inc. (NYSE: HNGR), owns and operates [approximately 800](#) patient care clinics nationwide, where comprehensive, outcomes-based orthotic and prosthetic care is delivered. Rooted in nearly 160 years of clinical excellence and innovation, the certified clinicians of Hanger Clinic provide compassionate, expert care and customized solutions for all ages, designed to increase the mobility and function of each person we have the honor of serving. For more information on Hanger Clinic, visit www.HangerClinic.com. Follow us at www.Facebook.com/HangerNews, www.Twitter.com/HangerNews, www.Instagram.com/HangerNews, and www.YouTube.com/HangerNews.

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