



Compression Garments

Introduction:

Compression garments are used to encourage proper circulation and reduce swelling in the legs. They may be prescribed for pain, achy legs, edema, varicose veins and lymphedema. They are available in pre-made and custom made styles. Pre-made garments will usually be chosen if the leg measurements fall within the size and compression that are used depending on the type of problem being treated. The doctor will determine the amount of compression needed.

Compression garments may be prescribed to cover only the ankle and calf or may cover the entire leg. There are different types of compression hose. Gradient compression hose are woven to apply greater pressure in the ankle and calf. TED Hose have minimal compression and are generally used on patients that are bed ridden or are not frequently up on their feet.

Application:

1. Fold the stocking back onto itself up to the ankle section.
2. Grasp the stocking at both sides at the top fold and pull onto the foot as far as possible.
3. Fold the excess fabric back down onto the leg.
4. Grasp the stocking and pull out the fold. Repeat until the heel is in place. Continue pulling the stocking up taking care to not just pull from the top. Use of rubber gloves (such as kitchen dishwashing gloves) may be helpful in grasping the stocking and working into place.
5. Continue pulling the stocking up to the top and smooth into place. The stocking must be pulled up to the top and smoothed into place. The stocking must be pulled all of the way up so that there are no wrinkles.
6. When in place, grasp the toe section; pull forward and release to allow more comfort for the toes (if garment is closed toe).
7. To remove the stocking, grasp the top and pull downward, turning it inside out.

Care and Maintenance:

Washing instructions vary from one manufacturer to another. Please refer to the manufacturer's instructions. Generally, the garment should be hand washed with a non-detergent, non-perfumed soap (Ivory or Dreft work well). The garment should be rinsed thoroughly in clean water and patted dry between two towels. The garment can then be dried flat or hung over a towel bar. If the stocking has silicone borders, clean the borders with a rag dampened with rubbing alcohol once a month to remove dead skin cells from the silicone.

Tips and Problem Solving:

Compression garments are expensive and must be cared for properly. Since a compression garment is not a typical stocking or sock, once the compression garment is applied another lightweight sock should be used to protect the garment from excessive wear with a shoe.

Sharp fingernails, rings, and jewelry can damage the stockings. Remove all jewelry and use the pads of the fingers when putting on the stocking. Rubber gloves may be worn if nails are long to protect the stocking and also aid in grasping the fabric.

Stockings should be put on upon rising before possible swelling occurs in the legs.

Feet and legs should be dry before putting on stockings. Baby powder may be used on the leg to make it easier to slide the stocking onto the leg.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the fit and function of your gradient compression garments, please call our office at 763-755-9500.