Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

How to use compression garments for lower limbs

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Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

How to Use Compression Garments for Lower Limbs

Patient Information

Tissue Viability Service

The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link: https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets or scan the QR code.



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Advice to patients

You have been prescribed a compression garment, this maybe a compression stocking or adjustable compression wrap. This leaflet demonstrates correct application of garments and highlights aspects of care to consider.

How to apply your stocking

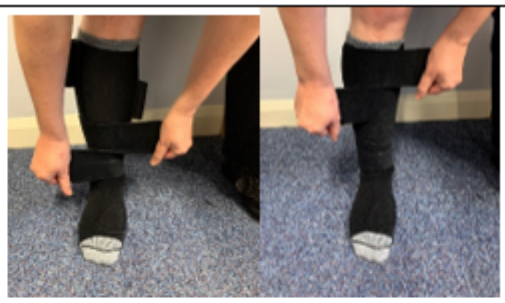
Ideally, your compression stocking should be put on first thing in the morning after you had a shower or bath. Your legs are not yet swollen at this stage.

It is best to take off your watch and jewellery to avoid damage to the fabric of the stocking. If you can wear rubber gloves, they will help you to grip the fabric and make it easier to put on the stocking.

1. Remove the stocking from package.	 Image 1
2. Turn the stocking inside out up to the heel.	 Image 2
3. Pull the stocking over your foot up to the heel.	 Image 3
4. Grasp the upper layer of fabric in the middle of the foot.	 Image 4
5. Lift the fabric over your heel and carefully pull evenly over your calf.	 Image 5
6. Pull the stocking up to your knee. Check that the whole stocking fits properly.	 Image 6

How to apply your adjustable compression Velcro wrap

Ideally, your compression stocking should be put on first thing in the morning after you had a shower or bath. Your legs are not yet swollen at this stage.

1. If you have been prescribed a foot piece, start with this first. Place your heel comfortably in the heel space and firmly press Velcro down on each strap.	
2. Apply the leg piece, ensuring the base of leg piece sits just above the ankle bone and finishes just below the bend of the knee.	
3. Starting at the bottom, take each strap and pull firmly in the opposite direction and press Velcro down. Continue until all straps have been fixed.	
4. Check the compression wrap fits comfortably. It can be adjusted throughout the day if you feel the garment needs to be loosened or tightened.	

Caring for compression garment

Please wash your garment at least once a week, following the manufacturer's instructions. Avoid detergents or fabric softeners which may irritate your skin and damage the garment.

Exercise

It is important that you exercise. If possible, walk two-three miles each day, or exercise by flexing your ankle up and down approximately 10 times each ankle. Do this for about half an hour whilst you are sitting in the chair.



Rest

Rest is also important. Try to have an hour or two in bed during the day, if possible. Sitting with your feet hanging down is nearly as bad for your legs as standing still.

Safeguard your legs

Protect your legs by keeping them warm and free from injury.

Patients often say that a knock to the leg is how their ulcers start. If the skin becomes itchy, do not scratch, as this can cause ulceration. If itching becomes a problem, seek help from your nurse. Avoid wearing tight garters, girdles, or socks, which will cause obstruction to the veins.

Your progress will be monitored by your Treatment Room Nurse or your District

Nurse. They will reassess your suitability for compression each year.

Please contact your nurse at once if:

- Your leg is more itchy, hot, or painful than usual
- You feel that the garment is too tight
- You lose sensation in your toes, or they turn cold or blue
- You have a change in your medical history
- You need any other advice



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