

## Compression hosiery advised for you

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## Getting in touch with CityCare

You can feed back any compliments, concerns, complaints or comments by:

T: 0115 883 9654

E: [ncp.customercare@nhs.net](mailto:ncp.customercare@nhs.net)

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# Compression Hosiery

Information leaflet for patients



## Why are people advised to wear compression hosiery?

Compression hosiery is usually worn for the following reasons:

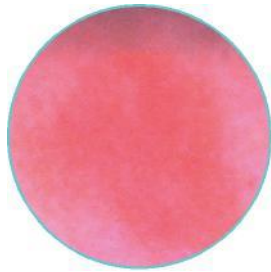
- To help reduce swelling (oedema) in the leg to prevent a leg ulcer developing.
- To prevent a healed venous leg ulcer recurring.

## When should compression hosiery be worn?

- Ideally compression hosiery should be worn every day and removed at night before going to bed then re applied again in the morning.
- If you are not able to remove your compression hosiery daily your nurse will discuss various options that can be considered to help with this.

## Each time you remove your compression hosiery you need to look for the following:

- Redness caused by hosiery digging in to your leg which does not disappear as this can be a sign of pressure damage. The heel, ankle, side of the foot, Achilles tendon and bunions are particularly prone to pressure damage, there is a simple test you can do to check if pressure damage is present it is known as the blanching test



Redness is the first response to pressure



Press finger over reddened area for 15 seconds, then lift up finger. When you take your finger off the area it should turn white/pale (blanche)



If the area blanches, it is not a pressure ulcer. If it stays red, it is a pressure ulcer.

Darkly pigmented skin does not blanch so pressure damage is difficult to detect the signs to look for over bony prominences include a visible darker tone in comparison to the rest of the skin, purple discolouration, the skin feeling too warm or cold, numbness, hardness, pain or swelling.

- Patches of itchy skin may be eczema developing and you may require a prescribed steroid cream to resolve this.
- Dry skin but no signs of redness may require a moisturising cream to resolve the problem.
- Pain and tenderness or numbness and tingling on any part of the leg can indicate that the stocking is too tight.
- Broken skin or areas of skin that are weeping fluid could be a leg ulcer developing.
- You also need to ensure that your hosiery stays in place and does not slip or wrinkle, if this keeps occurring you may need to be prescribed alternative hosiery.

***If any of the above is seen you must seek advice and help immediately from your GP, Community Nurse or Leg Ulcer Clinic.***

## Looking after your skin

Caring for your skin is important to ensure it remains hydrated and supple as this will help to reduce the risk of skin breakdown. Using an emollient as a soap substitute will help and it can also be used to moisturise the skin after washing if it appears dry.

Your Community Nurse or Leg Ulcer Clinic will advise you as to the most appropriate emollient to use.

## Looking after your compression stockings

When compression hosiery is washed it is important to follow the manufacturer's guidelines to ensure that the elasticity in the stocking is as maintained this ensures they still remain effective. The majority of compression hosiery cannot be washed over 40 degrees centigrade and most cannot be tumble dried.

If you notice any snags, ladders or holes in your compression hosiery you need to seek advice as new hosiery will need prescribing. Ideally your fingernails should be free from rough edges and stoned rings should be removed when removing and applying your hosiery to help to avoid snagging it.

## When should compression stockings be replaced?

One pair of compression hosiery should last 3 months. Two pairs should have been dispensed so you will have one pair to wash and one pair to wear. They will last for 6 months. Your GP surgery should have the details of previously prescribed stockings and they have also been detailed at the end of this leaflet.

## Review

Every year you will be invited to attend a clinic in order to be reassessed to check that your circulation is suitable for your continued use of compression stockings and to discuss any issues you may have with your stockings. You will either receive a letter or phone call with regard to this.