

Compression Stockings for Treatment of Either a Deep Vein Thrombosis or Pulmonary Embolism

**Hospital @ Home Team & Ambulatory Care
Medicine
Scunthorpe General Hospital**

**This leaflet has been designed to
give you important information and
to answer some common queries
you may have.**



Information for patients and visitors

Introduction

This information is for patients who have been advised to wear compression stockings following a Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) or a Pulmonary Embolism (PE). It explains why you need the stockings and how to wear them. It also tells you how to look for signs of problems.

What are compression stockings?

Compression stockings are also called graduated compression stockings. They are different to anti-embolism stockings that sometimes need to be worn after an operation. You should wear them every day for at least two years after being diagnosed with a DVT or PE. The stocking aims to prevent Post Thrombotic Syndrome. Symptoms might include permanent pain, swelling and discolouration in your calf.

What size stockings should I wear?

Immediately following your diagnosis of a DVT or PE the nurse will measure your legs to see what size compression stockings you need. Your legs should be measured again each six months and your stockings replaced to keep them effective. This should be done at your GP practice by either your GP or practice nurse and any more stockings are provided on prescription from your GP. You should have two stockings (or 4 for a PE) so you can wash one while wearing the other.

You only need to wear the stocking on the leg affected by a DVT or on both legs if diagnosed with a PE.

When should I wear the stockings?

Wear your compression stockings during the day and then take them off before you go to bed. Put them on again first thing in the morning. They may be removed if you are going swimming. They are meant to be firm when on as they need to provide a set amount of pressure to your veins. This will increase the blood flow and relieve pain, discomfort and swelling in your legs.

How do I put them on?

Insert your hand into the stockings as far as the heel pocket. Turn stocking inside out leaving the foot area the right way. Place the foot area over your foot and pull up to your heel, ensuring the heel pocket is correctly aligned over your heel. Pull the stocking up over your ankle, and then smooth out over your calf. You may need someone to help you to put them on. There are also aids available from the Pharmacy.

When wearing stockings be aware of the following:

- They must fit properly – do not turn the tops down as this may restrict your circulation. Ensure there is no bunching up of the stocking
- When sitting, ensure your stockings are not restricting the circulation at the knee



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- Always wash your stockings out by hand in warm soapy water to maintain their elasticity (instructions on correct washing can be found in the information leaflet in the box containing the stockings)

What problems should I look for?

You will need to check your toes and foot daily for sensation, circulation and movement. Stop wearing the stocking and report immediately to your GP if you have:

- discoloured toes (blue / white)
- toes become cold, painful or uncomfortable
- tingling / pins and needles in your toes
- swelling to your toes
- changes to the skin such as redness, a rash or itching

Contact Details for Further Information

The Nurses looking after you can be contacted on Tel number: 03033 305770 and are available 8am to 6pm every day.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service offers confidential advice, support and information on any health related matters.

If you have a comment, concern, complaint or compliment about the care or service you have received from the Trust you can contact the PALS team as follows:

Telephone: 03033 306518

Email: nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net

There are also offices at both the Diana Princess of Wales Hospital (near the main entrance) and Scunthorpe General Hospital (on the C Floor, near the outpatient department), should you wish to visit.

Please note: PALS should not be contacted for clinical advice relating to the content of this leaflet. The service should be contacted directly in the first instance.

Information for patients and visitors

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