



## A Client Guide to Self Care: Compression Hosiery

### Why do I need to wear compression hosiery?

If you have a healed leg ulcer, problems with varicose veins or swollen legs, you may have been prescribed compression hosiery to treat your leg.

This will help prevent further problems. Without hosiery, the blood slows down and it can cause your ankles to swell. Wearing hosiery keeps the blood moving efficiently and helps to reduce the swelling at the ankles.

### How do veins work?

Veins normally carry blood away from your feet, when you walk or when you put your feet up in the evening. Each of these veins has small sets of valves that prevent the fluid in the blood from returning down to the feet. After time, the valves cease to function effectively and fluid is allowed to pool in the feet which is why your feet often swell.

However, sometimes your feet may swell due to being unable to walk and exercise. This can often happen as we get older.

### Do I need to wear my hosiery all the time?

Your legs will swell when you are out of bed and hosiery will prevent this. Most people like to remove the hosiery at night as it is more comfortable. However, if you do this, it is important to apply it in the morning before you get up. In some circumstances, such as if you have an active leg ulcer, it may be appropriate to wear hosiery at night. If this is the case, it is important that you seek advice from your health care professional.

### How do I know what size or type to have?

There are a variety of manufactures of hosiery and selection will be based on what fits your requirements best. It is important that the correct size is chosen.

The nurse will show you samples of different types of hosiery and you can choose together the most suitable garment.

Choices include:

Colours	Hosiery is now available in an assortment of colours
Style	Open or closed toe; Stocking or ribbed sock; Knee length or full length
Fabric	Flat knit cotton; Circular knit (like normal tights/stockings)
Strengths	Class 1 (weakest strength) Class 2 (moderate strength) Class 3 (strong strength)



### What if I cannot get the hosiery on?

Your local healthcare professional will be able to demonstrate different stocking aids which may be able to aid you or your carer in your application. Some hosiery comes with liners and zips which may also be of help.

### How often should I replace my hosiery?

It is important that your hosiery is comfortable and continues to give you the correct support. You need to have your legs re measured and stockings replaced every 3 – 6 months.

For further information about compression hosiery or any other wound care related topic, please contact:

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