

General wear

- If the size of your legs alters significantly please contact the department for a review appointment.
- It may take up to eight weeks to know whether they are helping with your initial problem, so you need to persevere and give them time to work.
- If you have been prescribed stock compression stocking you can get these replaced by repeat prescription with your GP.
- If you develop a severe pain in your calf, stop wearing the stocking. Seek advice from your referrer immediately.

Eligibility

Your entitlement for stockings/hosiery can vary between patients due to different amounts of compression required. If you wish to purchase more hosiery above your NHS entitlement, you may do so by paying. Please contact the department for a quote and advice.

Contact us

Orthotics Department
South Block
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
London Road
Reading RG1 5AN

Tel: 0118 322 7552

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If you experience any problems with your stockings/hosiery please contact the department.

Your Orthotist is:

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Department of Orthotics

Guidelines for the
use of compression
stockings / hosiery

Information for patients

Aim

This leaflet is intended as further help to patients who have been supplied with compression hosiery to use during the day.

If advice in this leaflet differs from what you have been told in clinic, wear as directed by the specialist as this will be specific advice to your individual needs.

The stockings provide graduated compression to your legs to improve blood circulation, reduce swelling and aching and prevent varicose veins getting worse.

They reduce the risk of thrombosis and leg ulcers.

They help prevent the development of long-term leg swelling and ulceration in patients who have had deep vein thrombosis.



When and how long to wear it for

You should wear the stockings every day. Usually they should be put on in the morning and taken off last thing at night. If you have been told to do something different by your vascular specialist you should follow their instructions.

How to put your stockings on

- Gather up the leg section and put on the foot part so that the heel fits perfectly.
- Next, gradually ease the stocking up your leg in regular movements taking care not to twist it or pull at the edges.
- The stocking should lie evenly and smoothly without creases. Do not overstretch your stocking. Never roll it over at the top or you will increase the compression, which could cause circulation problems.
- The stockings need to be close fitting to work.
- Thigh length stockings may need to be worn with a suspender belt or have silicone backing to maintain their position.
- Putting on hosiery may be difficult to get used to. You will need to persevere. If this does not get easier contact the department for review. There are some

devices available which help with putting stockings on.

Washing instructions

The stockings should be machine washed at 40° and can be tumble dried on a mild setting. They should not be placed on a radiator, as heat damages the material.

To begin with

- Get used to the compression hosiery gradually by wearing for short periods of time as the tension can be uncomfortable to begin with.
- Ensure the foot piece is in place before pulling the hosiery up and make sure there are no creases.
- Care should be taken when wearing rings and rough fingernails.
- Household rubber gloves may help to put on stockings.
- Any red marks should fade after 15 minutes of removing the stockings. If they do not fade please contact the orthotic department for a review appointment and stop wearing the stockings.