

## Compression Stockings

If you have venous disease or swelling in your legs, your doctor may prescribe compression stockings. Compression stockings are special hose designed to prevent swelling (edema) in the feet, ankles and calves.

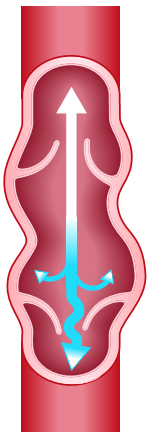
Compression stockings serve as an extra layer of muscle for your leg. They are very tight and squeeze the stretched vein walls together. This forces the vein valves to close and allows the blood to flow up and out of the leg. They also squeeze the leg tissues forcing fluids out of the legs.



### WHY DO I NEED TO WEAR COMPRESSION STOCKINGS?

Much like a deflated balloon, once the veins in your leg become stretched, there is no way to bring them back again. Compression stockings solve this problem by forcing your leg to pump blood correctly.

### HOW DO I KNOW IF I NEED COMPRESSION STOCKINGS?



Compression stockings are designed to help with phlebitis, thrombosis, and chronic venous disease. They are frequently used after vein surgery as well. Your doctor will prescribe compression stockings for you if they are needed. They come in a variety of compression strengths and your doctor should decide which strength is right for you.

If you have venous disease you will need to wear compression stockings for life. Without compression stockings your leg will swell. By using compression stockings, the swelling in your legs should be prevented. Over time, this will increase your mobility.



## HOW DO I GET COMPRESSION STOCKINGS?

Before you buy compression stockings it is important to have your legs measured by a trained medical professional. This ensures that you will receive the right size compression stockings. The best measurement occurs when your legs are least swollen. Once you know the correct size you can purchase stockings from online vendors or local medical supply stores. You will find that compression stockings come in a variety of colors and designs, so look around and find the right stocking for you.



## HOW OFTEN DO I WASH THEM?

Compression stockings should be washed everyday and completely dried before wearing again. It might be a good idea to purchase two sets of compression stockings to make sure you always have a clean pair. Wash your compression stockings according to manufacturer instructions.

It is recommended that you replace your stockings every 3-6 months. Call your insurance provider to see how often they will pay for replacement stockings.

**Call your doctor if your legs are swelling while you are wearing your stockings; it may be time to replace your stockings!**

## WHEN DO I WEAR COMPRESSION STOCKINGS?

You should wear compression stockings every day for the rest of your life. It is after a good nights sleep that legs are least swollen and the compression stockings will go on more easily. Put on your compression stockings first thing in the morning before you get out of bed and wear them all day. You can take them off at night and for bathing.

It is best to bathe in the evening right after you take your stockings off. Once your stockings are removed, bathe quickly and then get to bed where you can elevate your legs. It is best to sleep with your legs elevated keeping your feet higher than your heart.

**Immediately remove your compression stockings if you notice any of the following:**



- Your toes feel cool, numb or tingly
- Your toes are getting dark in color
- Increased discomfort or pain