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# Understanding Compression Hosiery

Helping people to be  
the best they can be

## Compression hosiery

Compression hosiery is a method of applying pressure to your legs to help your veins carry blood back to your heart. Before prescribing compression hosiery you need to be assessed to make sure this is the right treatment. This should have included assessing your blood flow using a Doppler ultrasound.

Compression hosiery is used to help prevent a leg ulcer from developing, or to prevent the reoccurrence of a leg ulcer.

## Your hosiery

There are a variety of hosiery manufacturers and selection will be based on what best fits your requirements. The hosiery most frequently used is fitted to the knee but occasionally full leg hosiery or tights may be recommended. Compression hosiery is available in different strengths (e.g. Class I, II & III). The level you need will be discussed with you following your assessment.

## Measuring you for your hosiery

It is important that the right size is chosen so the person providing your treatment will carry out the following measurements:

- Below knee hosiery - ankle and calf measurements.
- Full leg hosiery - ankle/calf and thigh measurements.
- Tights - ankle/calf, thigh, hip and waist measurements.

Occasionally the size of the leg does not fall into the standard sizing. Extra measurements will be taken if made to measure hosiery needs to be prescribed.

## How long will I have to wait?

Most chemists' stock standard sizes and these can be supplied within a few days. Supplies of made to measure hosiery will take a few weeks.

## Dos and Don'ts

- If stockings fit when collected, please order a second pair via your GP receptionist.
- Your stockings should last between 4-6 months, you may need to request further stockings from your GP
- When attending a reassessment please wear your compression hosiery and bring all hosiery with you.
- Do not wear the hosiery at night time.
- Apply emollients at night time when hosiery has been removed.
- Hosiery should be hand washed only using hand wash detergent unless stated otherwise.
- Do not dry stocking by direct heat i.e. on a radiator or in a tumble dryer, unless stated otherwise.