

Saphena®

Grip Anti-embolism stockings



Information for Patients

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VENOUS THROMBOEMBOLISM – BLOOD CLOTS

Venous thromboembolism (VTE) is a condition where a blood clot forms in a vein. This is most common in a leg vein, where it's known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT). A blood clot in the lungs is called a pulmonary embolism (PE).

The chance of developing them increases if you're immobile, unwell, had surgery, take certain medications, are pregnant or have recently given birth. (NHS England)

HOW DO ANTI-EMBOLISM STOCKINGS (AES) WORK?

Anti-embolism stockings improve the flow of blood in your veins by squeezing the leg. This increases the blood flow and prevents your leg veins from expanding, which stops blood pooling in your legs and forming a clot.

Anti-embolism stockings may be worn on their own or used in addition to medications that thin the blood, known as anticoagulant medication.

WHO DECIDES IF I NEED ANTI-EMBOLISM STOCKINGS?

You will be assessed for your risk of developing a blood clot by a doctor when you are admitted to hospital. If you are at risk of developing blood clots your doctor may feel you will benefit from wearing anti-embolism stockings.

If you need anti-embolism stockings a member of the nursing team will measure your legs and select the right size for you.

HOW TO PUT ON YOUR STOCKINGS



Place hand into the stocking and take hold of the heel section.

Turn the stocking inside out, stopping at the heel.



Apply the stocking over the foot. Ensure that the heel section is placed underneath the heel.



Continue placing the stocking up onto the ankle and calf. Caution, fingernails may damage the fabric.

Ensure that the heel section remains underneath the heel.



Make sure the stocking sits evenly on the skin smoothing out any wrinkles.

To ensure good circulation, make sure that the top band of the stocking finishes two fingers from the back of the knee, the heel is placed correctly and the open toe is placed under the toe area.

HOW TO REMOVE YOUR STOCKINGS



Pull down the top of the stocking over itself, remove the calf, ankle and foot.

Turn the stocking the right way out before re-applying.

HOW LONG WILL I HAVE TO WEAR THE STOCKINGS?

You will need to wear the stockings day and night until you are discharged or no longer have significantly reduced mobility. You may still need to wear them after you go home. You will be told before you are discharged if this is the case.

When wearing the stockings, remove for once a day for maximum of 30 minutes to check skin, then wash and dry legs before re-applying. If concerned please seek advice from hospital ward or GP.

HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AND YOUR STOCKINGS

- The anti-embolism stockings may be difficult to put on. You may need some help from a carer or relative to apply and remove the stockings.
- If you are discharged from hospital with anti-embolism stockings you should be assessed to ensure if you or a carer can fit the stockings. If you are unable to do this, please tell the nurse before going home.
- The stockings should be worn day and night. Remove your stockings for 30 minutes every day to inspect your skin and undertake personal hygiene. Your stockings should then be put back on.
- Clean stockings should be put on every 3 days, or sooner if they become dirty. The stockings may be washed in the washing machine at up to 75° for up to 15 times before a new pair will be required. Do not use bleach when washing the stockings.
- Dry the stockings at room temperature. The stockings should not be hung over the radiator to dry or put in a tumble dryer. Do not iron the stockings as this could cause them to shrink.
- To prevent you slipping do not attempt to walk whilst wearing the stockings, unless you are wearing the stockings with GRIP on the soles. Otherwise you must wear well-fitting slippers or shoes whilst wearing the stockings.
- Do not leave the stockings rolled down your legs. This cancels the benefit of wearing them and can constrict blood flow.
- Avoid using ointments on your skin as these may damage the stocking fibres and make the stockings slip down.
- Tell the nurse looking after you if you experience pain, numbness, pins and needles, discolouration of your toes, leg swelling, redness or blistering. If you are wearing the stockings at home following discharge and experience any of the above, then contact your GP.

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Public Involvement team at patient.involvement@ulh.nhs.uk or call on 01476 464560.