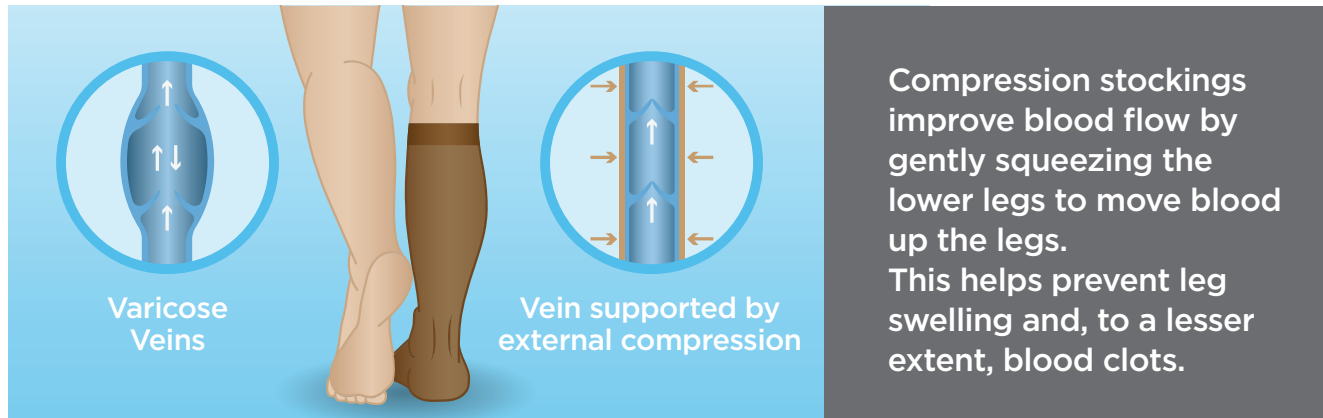


Calvary Community Care Compression stockings.

Reduces swelling and improves blood flow in the lower limbs



What are Compression Stockings?

Often prescribed for varicose veins, spider veins, or after surgery, compression stockings may help with:

- aching and heavy feeling in legs.
- leg swelling possibly due to oedema (fluid retention) or lymphoedema.
- preventing blood clots (DVTs), especially after surgery or injury (or due to illness or mobility problems when a person is less active).

Types of Compression Stockings

Compression stockings are available in different:

Pressures: light to strong pressure. (TEDs have strong pressure – used to prevent clots).

Lengths: knee-high or to the top of the thigh

Colours: Usually a brownish colour, but TED stockings are typically white.

Some have holes at toes or ball of the foot.

Wearing Compression Stockings

Compression stockings

- are to be worn all day and removed at night.
- should feel firm on the legs.

Most pressure will be felt around the ankles with less pressure higher up the legs.

Applying Compression Stockings

Apply stocking first thing in the morning when legs have the least amount of swelling. (See over page for application technique.)

Caring for Compression Stockings

Use two pairs of stockings so one can be worn whilst the other is washed.

- Wash stockings every day with mild soap and water. Rinse in clear cold water.
- Roll stocking in a dry clean towel and squeeze to remove excess water.
- Lay stocking flat on a dry towel to air dry.
- Do not tumble dry or iron stockings.
- Replace the stockings if there are holes, they are frayed or laddered or if they become too loose

Do Not Apply the Stockings if:

- The leg is red/painful/swollen, or hot to touch (possibly cellulitis).
- The leg has a wound/rash/blister/ulcer or skin tear.
- The leg is itchy
- Remove stockings if the stockings are painful or create numbness, or 'pins and needles' in the feet or legs.

How to put on on Compression (TED) or Support Stockings (knee length)



1. Feed stocking up your arm

Find the heel of the stocking and face it towards you. Place your palm upright and tuck your thumb in. Feed stocking up your arm.



6. Place the foot into the toe cave (heel at base)

Feed the foot into the toe cave up to the point of your heel. It should be tight and wrinkle free. (Ensure you match the heel of the stocking with your heel.)



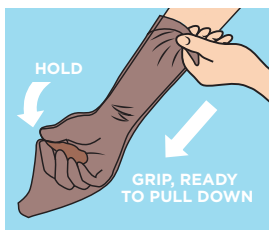
2. Grip the heel and tuck it in

Grip the heel and tuck it into your palm like you are making a hand puppet. Now that you have the mouth of the puppet hold it tight.



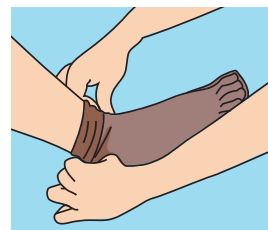
7. Stretch out the top of the stocking

Stretch out the stocking top so you can feed this back over the foot to the ankle.



3. Using the other hand take hold of the top of the stocking

With both hands gripping separate areas you are ready to turn the stocking inside out.



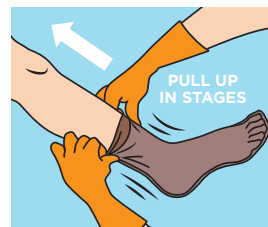
8. Check for wrinkles

The foot should now be encased with a single layer of the stocking. Smooth out the foot area so there are no wrinkles.



4. Pull the stocking down and off your arm

With a swift movement turn the stocking inside out, still holding onto the heel 'hand puppet' area.



9. Pop on some rubber dishwashing gloves

Dishwashing gloves will help with gripping and pulling. Pull the stocking up in stages (don't try to pull it up in one go).



5. You've made a toe cave

The stocking will hold itself stiff and you'll find you've created a toe cave. Check that the heel is at the base before you feed this onto the foot.



10. Pull and smooth

Pulling up the stocking and smoothing each stage will help with a perfect fit. Ensure the top of the stocking sits two fingers below the bottom of your kneecap so it doesn't cut into circulation.

Additional Tips

Make sure there are no wrinkles in your stockings.

(Wrinkles can lead to increased pressure preventing adequate blood flow/circulation.)

Make sure legs are dry and free from post shower dampness, oils or lotions.

(Apply lotion/oil at night when stockings are removed as they may affect the stocking fibres).

Aids are available e.g. a stocking applicator or silky slip, that assist with the application of compression stockings.

Need support? Calvary Community Care can support safe, independent living at home with a variety of services and expert advice. Call 1300 66 00 22 for more information.

Contact your Service Centre or healthcare professional immediately if any of the following occurs:

- The leg is red, painful, swollen, hot to touch or has a wound, rash, blister, ulcer or skin tear
- The leg is numb or experiencing pins and needles
- The stockings feel too uncomfortable or tight e.g. top band cutting into the thigh
- Stockings are creasing behind the knee. Firstly try smoothing out the wrinkles.
- Stocking is slipping/falling down (too loose or not functioning as it should).
- Foot/leg is more swollen than usual. Try elevating the leg (ensure they have the ability to lower the leg when you have gone). If the client has been prescribed diuretics (fluid tablets) check that they are taking them.
- Check during skin care and/or through the inspection hole in the toe or under the foot of the stocking that the person's toes are warm to the touch and pink in colour. (If they are not, this may indicate poor circulation due to stocking perhaps being an incorrect fit, or another circulation issue).

References:

Pascarella L, Shortell C. Chronic venous disorders: nonoperative treatment.
In: Cronenwett JL, Johnston KW, eds. Rutherford's Vascular Surgery. 8th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier Saunders; chap 56.
Better Health Channel
NHS Choices
US National Library of Medicine - Medline Plus Medical Encyclopedia
Google Images

Related Health Topics:

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/deep-vein-thrombosis>

Lymphoedema

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/lymphoedema>

Oedema (fluid retention)

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Oedema/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/Fluid%20retention>

Cellulitis

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/cellulitis>