



St Oswald's
Hospice

Application & Care of Compression Garments

St Oswald's Hospice
Lymphoedema Service

Quality time for everyone

The Lymphoedema Service at St Oswald's aims to offer a service to individuals with lymphoedema, whatever the cause. We help patients to understand their condition and offer advice on how they can adapt everyday activities in order to successfully control their lymphoedema.

This leaflet aims to give you clear information about your compression garments:

- How to apply and remove them
- What to do if you notice any problems
- How to take care of the garments

Application of your garment

When should I wear my garment?

Your compression garments should be applied first thing in the morning, and removed in the evening unless you have been instructed to do otherwise by your Lymphoedema Practitioner.

Body lotions/ Emollients

Please be careful when applying to your arm or leg as over time moisturisers can start to damage the garment material. Check to ensure that all of the moisturiser has soaked in before your garment is applied.

Folds and wrinkles

All folds and wrinkles should be fully removed from your compression garment when it is applied. This can be achieved by wearing a pair of household rubber gloves whilst putting your garment on.

Garments should not be folded back at the top or bottom e.g. footpiece / handpiece.

If you notice that the fit of your garment is becoming difficult, for example, from weight gain, weight loss, reduced movement or function in your arms or legs or changes to your health, please ask your GP for advice. They will discuss options with you to address this problem, such as, referral back to St Oswald's Lymphoedema Service for an assessment or referral to Social Services to request carers to help you apply your compression garment/wrap.

What to do if you have difficulties putting on your garment

You may have been provided with an aid to help you apply/ remove your garment.

If you notice any of the following please remove your garment immediately and contact your GP:

- Any redness or rash, increased heat, tenderness and/or increased swelling to your arm or leg that doesn't improve overnight. This might be cellulitis (infection of the skin) which may need treating with antibiotics (see advice on skincare and cellulitis leaflet)
- Damage/discolouration to your skin. This may occur if your garment has not been applied correctly or your oedema has increased and your garment no longer fits correctly.
- Pain and/or pins and needles or numbness that only occurs when you have the garment on. This may indicate that your oedema is no longer controlled and your garment has become too tight and is causing a problem with your circulation.

How to take care of your garment

It is recommended that garments should be washed daily in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Garments should be replaced every six months, or when:

- They begin to lose their elasticity or support
- They develop holes or ladders
- They become too tight or too loose
- Your oedema has increased and your garment no longer fits correctly

Getting additional/ replacement garments

The garments you are wearing are available on prescription from your GP. If you have any concerns or queries about your compression garments please contact your GP for advice.

This leaflet is available in a range of formats.
Please ask a member of our team if you require
a different format. **Thank you**

We are a registered charity and rely on voluntary donations
and legacies to enable us to care for patients and families.



**St Oswald's
Hospice**

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