

THE AIM OF THIS BOOKLET IS TO HELP PATIENTS AND CARERS UNDERSTAND HOW *COMFIPRESSION* HOSIERY GARMENTS CAN HELP WITH THE TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF VENOUS DISEASE.

THE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL THAT IS TREATING YOU WILL BE FAMILIAR WITH THE PROBLEMS THAT VENOUS DISEASE CAN CAUSE YOU AND THE BENEFITS THAT *COMFIPRESSION* HOSIERY CAN OFFER YOU.

This booklet does not replace the need to seek professional help so please ask your healthcare professional if you have any questions about either your treatment or your progress.

Before you begin wearing *Comfipression* hosiery we recommend that you have been fully assessed by an appropriately qualified healthcare professional that has diagnosed you with venous disease and measured your limb to ensure you are provided with the correct size of garments.



**OUR
WORK
PROTECTS
YOUR
WORLD™**



Synergy Health (UK) Ltd, Healthcare Solutions
Matrix Park, Chorley PR7 7NB, England
Telephone: +44 (0)1772 299900 Fax: +44 (0)1772 299901
Email: healthcaresolutions@synergyhealthplc.com

www.synergyhealthplc.com

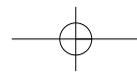
Comfipression is a trademark of Synergy Health plc.

© Synergy Health plc 2008 SHI0978 Oct08



ComfiPRESSION™
A PATIENTS' GUIDE





VENOUS DISEASE?

Venous disease is a condition that typically affects the veins in your legs. The term 'venous disease' is used to describe a broad range of conditions that may include varicose veins, swollen legs (oedema) and in the more severe cases, open ulcers on the lower legs.

Venous disease normally occurs when the valves in the veins stop working properly. Ordinarily the blood in the leg veins is helped back to the heart by a combination of movement (walking) which activates the 'calf muscle pump' and the presence of one way valves in the veins.

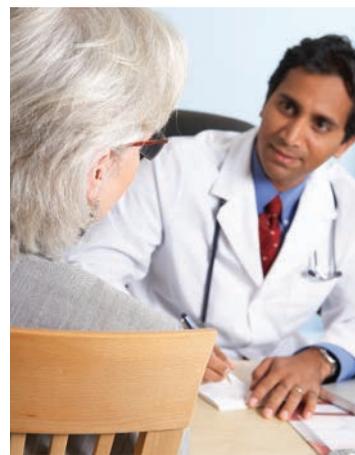
Movement causes the muscles in the legs to squeeze the blood back up through the leg veins towards the heart and the presence of the one way valves keeps the blood moving in the right direction (back towards the heart).

In people with venous disease, the valves in the leg tend not to work as efficiently as they should and this results in more blood collecting in the leg veins which

leads to an increase in pressure within the veins.

This increase in pressure can result in the presence of varicose veins, the legs will often become swollen (oedema) and tender, and the skin may feel dry and itchy.

People with venous disease will often notice changes to the skin on their lower legs. This can result in areas of dark colouration, the skin may become thin and stretched and even the slightest knock can result in an ulcer developing. Venous ulcers often occur just above the ankle bone and will vary in size, shape and colour. For some people they may be very painful and it is not unusual for them to produce a discharge which can have an unpleasant smell. Even when ulcers are treated properly they can take many months to heal.



HOW CAN VENOUS DISEASE BE TREATED?

Before you start any treatment it is important that you have seen your healthcare professional who will give you a thorough examination to confirm that you have venous disease. Venous disease is a chronic condition which cannot be cured,

however, it can be effectively managed. It tends to be a progressive disease, so the earlier it is identified and treatment begins the less it is likely to impact upon you in the long term.

The most common and effective way to treat venous disease, and its numerous complications, is with the application of compression (pressure) therapy.

Applying controlled external pressure on the leg will help in the following ways;

- It aids the return of any excess fluid in the limb back into the blood stream. This excess fluid is responsible for leg swelling (oedema) so by returning the fluid into the blood stream a swollen leg will return to a more normal shape and size. If you want your limb size to remain normal you will have to continue to wear your compression garments during the day otherwise your leg will begin to swell up again.
- It reduces the pressure in the leg veins by decreasing the width of the vein and squeezing blood back up through the veins and towards the heart. This can help reduce the pain that can be associated with varicose veins.



- It magnifies the effect that movement (such as walking) has on the blood flow. Therefore even the effects of gentle exercise will result in more blood in the lower limbs moving back towards the heart. This improves the circulation of blood in your feet and legs.

HOW DOES COMFIPRESSION HOSIERY WORK?

Your *Comfipression* hosiery kit is a 2 layer system consisting of a white liner with closed toes and a honey colour stocking with open toes. To receive the most effective compression the stocking should be worn over the top of the liner as detailed in the application guide and instructions for use.



When worn, the *Comfipression* hosiery kit will apply a consistent and controlled pressure to your leg that will help reduce the impact of your venous disease. You may notice a reduction in pain and swelling in your affected leg.

In order to get the best out of your *Comfipression* hosiery you should try to wear it for as long as possible. If you are not wearing the garments then they cannot help you to manage your venous disease.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COMFIPRESSION HOSIERY?

Comfipression hosiery has many benefits;

- It applies sufficient pressure to effectively treat your venous disease.
- The garments are simple to fit and do not require any special skills or training in order to fit them.

- Garments can be applied by you, your carer or a healthcare professional.
- The garments can be removed as necessary. This enables you to shower or wash your leg or to remove the garments when you go to bed at night. If you do remove the garments when in bed remember to put them on again before you get out of bed the next day!
- Such flexibility means minimal intrusion or disruption to your everyday lifestyle.
- The garments are not bulky and enable you to continue to wear your everyday footwear.
- Garments can be washed up to 100 times as per the instructions. This keeps them fresh and clean and ensures they offer maximum value for money before they need replacing.

Note: *When you first put the Comfipression garments on they are likely to feel snug and firm around your leg but they should not be painful or create any high pressure points that are sore or uncomfortable for you.*

WHEN CAN I STOP WEARING COMFIPRESSION HOSIERY?

Because venous disease is a chronic condition that cannot be reversed it may be necessary to wear *Comfipression* hosiery for months or years. Your healthcare professional will be able to assess you on an individual basis and make recommendations that are specific to you and the severity of your venous disease.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MYSELF?

It is important to take care of your legs, keep them clean and try to avoid any skin damage like scratches, or cuts as these can sometimes result in ulceration. If you have a cut or scratch that is taking longer than it should normally

take to heal, make sure you tell your healthcare professional as soon as possible.

If you notice any changes to the skin on your leg (i.e. darker colouration, redness, tenderness etc) be sure to tell your healthcare professional at the earliest opportunity.

Be as active as possible. Even small amounts of exercise, walking around the house for example, will help push the blood out of the legs and back towards the heart. When sitting in a chair try to elevate your legs by resting them on a stool as this will help prevent the blood from gathering in your legs and causing problems in your veins.

Wear your *Comfipression* hosiery for as much of the time as possible. They will help with the management of your venous disease so the more you wear them the more you will benefit from them.

Once you have fitted your *Comfipression* hosiery if your leg begins to feel sore, painful or numb or if the skin on your leg becomes red and inflamed then you should remove the garments and contact your healthcare professional as soon as possible.

