



### Compression Garments

Compression garments play a very important role in helping you to manage your lymphoedema and continue living independently.

#### The role of the Compression Garment:

The garments work by:

- Limiting the build-up of lymph fluid.
- Provides a firm encasement for the muscles to work against.
- Increasing the pressure in the tissues and encourage the fluid to drain back into the lymphatic system.
- They encourage the fluid to move to an area that is draining well.
- Reduces the risk of an AIE.

#### Applying the Garment:

When you're fitted for your compression garment you will be shown how to put on and remove the garment. Here are some useful suggestions:

- Put your garment on first thing in the morning when the limb is at its smallest. It is best not to put it on straight after a shower or bath as dampness can make it difficult to put on.
- Start by turning the stocking or sleeve inside out as far as the wrist or heel part. Pull the garment over your hand or foot and ease it up, a bit at a time. Make sure you don't pull it up by the top of the garment.
- Do not turn or roll the top over – this will restrict the blood flow and cause more swelling.
- If you have lymphoedema in your arm, wearing a rubber glove on your unaffected hand may help when putting your compression garment on.
- Applying a little un-perfumed talc to your arm or leg can help to ease the garment on. There are different aids available to help put garments on and to take them off.



# St Luke's

## Lymphoedema

- Make sure the material is spread evenly and there are no wrinkles or creases when your garment is on. Wearing a rubber glove on the unaffected hand can help you smooth the garment out.
- Moisturise your skin at night after you've taken off your garment rather than in the morning, because cream makes the sleeve or stocking difficult to put on.

### **Wearing the Compression Garment:**

- To get the best results you will need to wear your sleeve all day everyday
- The sleeves have a high working pressure so are most effective when you are active – you should always wear these when active.
- You are entitled to two garments on prescription so you can wash one and wear one.

### **Care of the Garment:**

- Wash up to 40 degrees or hand wash
- Do not tumble dry
- Do not iron
- Before washing garment thoroughly wash the silicone band

### **When not to apply the Compression Garment:**

- Remove if you have an AIE and only reapply
- Remove if you:
  - Experience any numbness
  - Pins and needles
  - Persistent pain
  - Your fingers or toes change colour
- Contact your therapist if you experience any weeping through garments