

In this together

Summer 2017

**Supporting you
all Daylong**

**Wear it well:
why the fit of your
garment matters**

**Need an innovative
compression product?
It's a wrap**

**Difficulties with getting
the right compression
garment quickly?**

**You've got to be
in it to swim it!**



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Activa® compression hosiery
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| | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | Welcome to <i>In this together</i>: your new magazine Your new magazine for all things compression! |
| 6 | Supporting you all Daylong Find out all about Daylong's compression garment expertise |
| 10 | Wear it well: why the fit of your garment matters Understand how your compression works |
| 12 | Commonly encountered compression problems solved Compression garment problems? We are here to help |
| 14 | Need an innovative compression product? It's a wrap! Find out if a compression wrap could work for you |
| 18 | A compression wrap gave back my independence Derek Nicholls describes how using a wrap made his life easier |
| 20 | Leg Clubs: lower-limb care in a friendly social setting Read all about Leg Clubs and find one near you |
| 22 | Difficulties with getting the right compression garment quickly? Clinicians discuss the issues surrounding dispensing |
| 26 | My compression community Mary Woods, Lead Lymphoedema Nurse, shares her day |
| 28 | Here ye, here ye: a trip down memory lane Peter White shares his experience of life with lymphoedema |
| 29 | Lymphoedema Support Network Discover what this charity does to raise lymphoedema awareness |
| 30 | You've got to be in it to swim it Learn how swimming can help to improve your health |

Opinions expressed in the articles do not necessarily reflect those of Daylong. Any products referred to by the authors should only be used as recommended by manufacturers' data sheets.

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Comfort, Health and Style!

CHOOSING THE BEST COMPRESSION GARMENT IS NOW EVEN EASIER

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Email your BSN medical Account Manager, to ask about how SoftFit Technology may improve patient concordance, at compression.uk@bsnmedical.com, or visit our website for more information at www.bsnmedical.co.uk.

*Recommended for the treatment of chronic oedema associated with lymphoedema

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Welcome to *In this together*: your new magazine

Hello and welcome to the very first edition of *In this together*, your new magazine from Daylong. As the name suggests, we want this new, free magazine to bring together everyone who is involved in compression therapy, whether you are a wearer, carer, prescriber, designer, manufacturer or dispenser of compression.

It is likely that you or someone you know will suffer from a lymphatic and/or vascular disorder; they affect almost everyone in the UK to some degree and are largely managed using compression therapy. This is why it is in all our interests to ensure that the UK provides the very best products and services to everyone that needs a compression solution to get on and live their lives. Sadly, we know that many people who need compression can experience difficulties with their garments. Problems such as inaccurate dispensing of product, poor fit and discomfort can lead to compression not being worn as it should, to the detriment of the wearer.

Here at Daylong we care passionately about compression and fast accurate dispensing. More importantly, we care

We believe that by creating a compression community we can work together to overcome the challenges of compression therapy.

passionately about the people who wear it. We see this magazine as the natural next step in providing help, advice and education to everyone who needs it to live life to the full while wearing compression.

We believe that by creating a compression community which shares experiences and ideas, we can work together to overcome the challenges of compression therapy. This edition is full of such experiences, in addition to essential information on the latest innovations and advice on overcoming the practical issues many users of compression face.

We hope you enjoy reading *In this together* and find it informative. Please let us know what you would like to read in future issues or send us articles, hints or tips that you have found helpful and that you think other people might find useful as well. This magazine is your voice and we would love to hear from you. 



*Rob Holder,
Managing Director,
Daylong*



Supporting you all Daylong

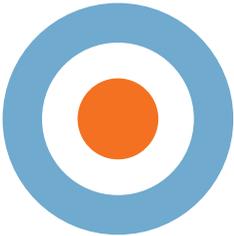


Did you know that Daylong are specialists at dispensing compression? Read on to discover the benefits of our service, and how you can order your compression direct from us in two easy steps!



Daylong is a business with unrivalled expertise in compression

A business that can dispense products against prescriptions written by a GP or nurse prescriber is known as a Dispensing Appliance Contractor (DAC). Daylong is a DAC. This simply means that instead of collecting your prescribed products from your local pharmacy, we can send them to you free of charge at home. Using Daylong has many advantages:

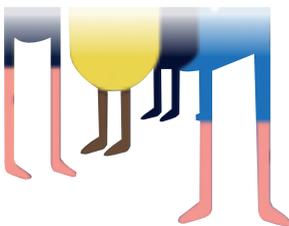


Accuracy

We are proud that we are 99% accurate in our dispensing*, especially as some pharmacies have been reported to dispense 50% of compression garments incorrectly.**

Speed

We dispense products quickly, usually within five working days of receipt of the prescription, direct to an address of your choice.



Expertise and experience

Our customer service team has over 20 years' experience in compression garment dispensing, including made to measure products, making us well placed to offer advice on the increasingly wide range of products available.

Choice

We can provide ready made and made to measure compression products from a wide variety of manufacturers.



Customer service

We are proud to have achieved a customer service rating of 96% based on feedback from our customers.

**Based on 2016 ISO 9001 Audit. **All Wales Lymphoedema Service and Community Pharmacy Wales Collaborative Project (2013)*



Daylong is a Feefo gold trusted merchant for the third year running; an independent testimony to the quality of our service. But don't just take our word for it, hear from our happy customers!

"The product I wanted was available and sent to me quickly. Can't ask for more than that!"

CG

"I am a returning customer. I use the company because it offers a wide selection of products and good service."

AP

"My goods arrived on time, well packaged, and exactly as ordered."

SMcK

"Efficient service, speedy delivery, excellent products. Thank you."

KR

"I have used Daylong for a long time now as it's an excellent service."

IH

"My consultant gave me the details so I just had to order the stockings and not worry about choosing a size, etc. The package arrived within a couple of days."

SE

"Very pleased in every way."

RP

"I ordered the wrong size and a replacement was sent straight away with no fuss."

IB

1. Send your prescription to us

Send your prescription to us along with any other paperwork you may have been given by your healthcare professional (e.g. a made to measure form).

If you pay for your prescription, send a cheque along too, or call 0115 932 0144 and we can take your payment over the phone.

2. We send your prescription to you

We will then send your hosiery, exactly as it was prescribed, direct to your home for free.



Essential skin care in five easy steps

1 Cleanse

Wash your skin daily. Avoid using perfumed products which might irritate your skin and cause it to dry out.

2 Dry

Dry your skin well. Make sure any skin folds are dried thoroughly to prevent the skin breaking down and becoming at risk of infection.

3 Check out your skin

Look at your skin for any changes in its condition. If there are any cuts or scratches, treat them with an antiseptic to help reduce the risk of infection. Treat insect bites with antihistamine cream. Look out for redness, heat, and swelling which might indicate an infection. If concerned, contact your healthcare professional immediately for advice.

TOP TIP

Stay hydrated

The skin has a large water content, and when well hydrated, is plump and more resilient. Aim to drink 6–8 glasses of water a day to boost your skin health.

4 Moisturise

Moisturise your skin to keep it supple and to soothe any irritation caused by dryness. For normal skin, one application of a bland, unperfumed moisturiser is enough. For dry skin, a paraffin-based emollient applied twice a day will be beneficial. Whatever your skin type, apply before bed for maximum benefit.

Remember, always apply in downward strokes to stop the hair follicles becoming blocked.

5 Wait a while

Don't apply compression garments straight after moisturising. Emollients can damage the fabric of your garment, and can make application difficult. 





Wear it well: why the fit of your garment matters

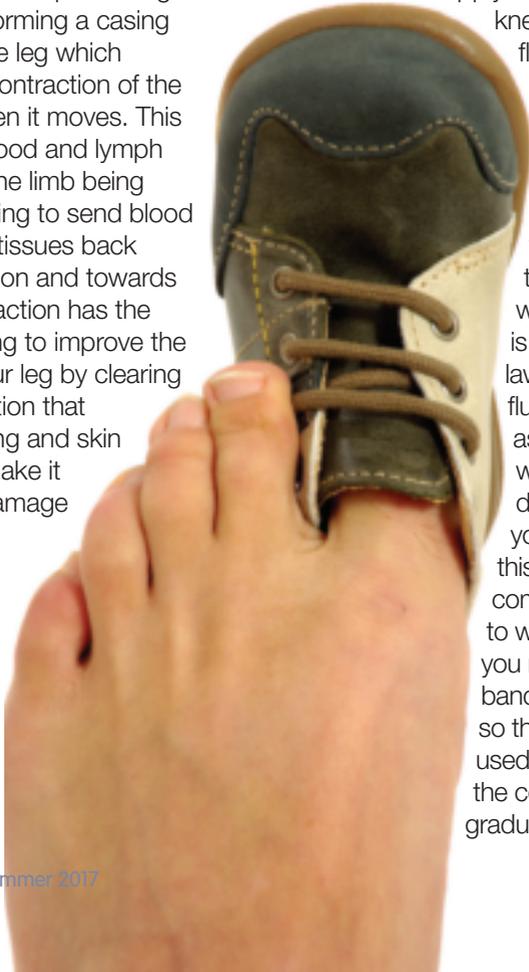
Several studies have highlighted that most people who are prescribed compression don't fully understand the benefits of wearing it. For lower-limb compression garments to work effectively, they must fit well. Here we highlight how compression therapy works and why good fit is so important.

Lower-limb compression garments work by forming a casing around the leg which enhances the contraction of the calf muscle when it moves. This results in the blood and lymph vessels inside the limb being squeezed, helping to send blood and fluid in the tissues back into the circulation and towards the heart. This action has the benefit of helping to improve the condition of your leg by clearing out the congestion that results in swelling and skin changes that make it vulnerable to damage and ulceration.

Graduated compression, where the garment applies the most pressure at the ankle tapering off to

apply the least pressure at the knee, improves blood and fluid return to the heart most effectively.

To work properly, graduated compression relies on your leg shape being thinner at the ankle and wider at the knee. This is simply because of the laws of physics by which fluids move. Factors such as swelling or wounds which need big, bulky dressings, may mean your limb will not keep this shape necessary for compression garments to work. If this is the case, you might need to use bandaging for a short time so that padding can be used to return your limb to the correct proportions for graduated compression to





be effective. After a while, if the swelling reduces so that your limb has a graduated shape, or if your wound has reduced in size so a less bulky dressing is needed, it may be possible for you to wear hosiery.

Whatever type of compression garment you have, it must fit correctly and be worn long-term on a daily basis to get the health benefits. If your garment is cut, folded, wrinkled, too large, too small, too tight or too big or too old, or adapted in any way, it won't work as it should, and may cause you harm.

If bad fit or discomfort is a problem for you, speak to your healthcare professional and discuss what other compression garments are available that may be more suitable. Persevere until you get the perfect fit. If your shoes hurt, you wouldn't put up with pain and blisters or go barefoot...your compression garment is the same. If you do not fall into standard sizes, made to measure garments are available for the perfect fit. Remember, if your garment is not on your limb, it can't be working to ease the congestion in your legs. So wear it well! 

Don't de-compress!

In a study* of over 3000 patients who were prescribed compression hosiery for chronic venous disease, non-wearing of stockings was a major cause of treatment failure.

The two major factors for not wearing compression were discomfort when wearing (including 'cutting off' circulation and being 'too hot' to wear), and a sense of restriction caused by the garment.

Another study** of compression hosiery that reviewed its wear for all uses, including treatment of leg ulcers, varicose veins, lymphoedema, DVT and post-thrombotic syndrome, showed failure to wear compression garments because of pain, discomfort and difficulty putting on was common.

In both studies, most reasons given for not wearing compression are easily resolved by changing the garment so it fits better or is made from a more suitable fabric.

*Raju S et al (2007) Use of compression stockings in chronic venous disease: patient compliance and efficacy. *Ann Vasc Surg* 21(6): 790-5

**Chung SL, Davies AH (2014) Graduate compression stockings. *CMAJ JAMC* 186(10): E391-8

Steps to help your compression to help you!

1. Walk

Walking gets your calf muscle working and your blood pumping. It helps to improve circulation in your lower limb. Exercising while wearing your compression enhances these benefits even more!

2. Move your foot

Move your foot backwards and forwards whenever you get the chance to keep your calf muscle pumping and your blood moving.

3. Rest

Elevate your feet when you can. Ideally, your feet should be above the level of your heart to help the blood and fluid from your legs to return more easily.



Commonly encountered compression problems solved

Here our Daylong expert provides advice on commonly encountered compression garment problems. If you have a problem with your garment, write to us at editorial@daylong.co.uk and we will try to help.



Q Why does my compression garment roll when I wear it?

A Garments roll for a variety of reasons. For example, if swelling is present, rolling may occur because the fabric is not stiff enough to contain it. Rolling will also occur if the style of the garment is unsuitable for the shape of limb, or if the garment size is incorrect. Also consider if the top band of the garment is too narrow to achieve good anchorage.

To avoid rolling, check that your garment is made from the best material for your condition, and that it is delivering the right amount of compression. For example, a limb with lymphoedema might require a stiffer fabric to contain the swelling. Would a thigh length garment suit your limb shape better? If all these factors are correct and rolling is still a problem, remeasure your limb and check your measurements against

the manufacturer's size chart to make sure they correspond with your hosiery. If the fit is correct, consider the use of a hosiery adhesive to help the top band stay in place, as long as its not restrictive.

Q I know my compression garment needs to be tight, but how tight? My hosiery digs in and is painful and uncomfortable to wear.

A The garment should feel supportive on the limb but not dig in or cause discomfort. Wearing a garment that is too tight and uncomfortable could result in damage to your skin and, in extreme cases, restrict your circulation. It's important that your limb is measured according to the manufacturer's guidelines for the specific garment you are buying/wearing to ensure correct size and an accurate fit. Remember that your compression needs may change according to your health and the condition of



your limb. For example, if swelling reduces, your garment may become loose. If your footwear had a poor fit you wouldn't tolerate it and your hosiery shouldn't be any different! Keep trying to find the right garment and fit for you, it will be well worth it.

Q When I walk my garment wrinkles around my ankle. Why is this?

A This could be for one of several reasons. If your garment did fit, but is suddenly falling down, think about its age. Near the end of its shelf life, usually around 3-6 months, the garment may have lost its elasticity and will need replacing. If your limb had swelling which has reduced since you were measured for your garment, this could explain why it is looser. If your garment has just been purchased/prescribed and is falling down, it's possibly the wrong size so either you or your clinician should remeasure your limb and check measurements against the manufacturer's size chart to be sure.

Q I can't even get my garment on, let alone wear it. This can't be right?

A Check your limb measurements against the manufacturer's size chart to ensure you have the correct garment. If the size is right, but you still find it hard to apply, there are different aids available that can assist with application, or a different style or type of product might help; one with a softer fabric, or zip fastening, for example.

Compression wraps which fasten with VELCRO® might also be an alternative.

Q My compression garment bunches up when I wear it. Why does this happen and how can I stop it?

A If your compression garment bunches up or the fabric creases during wear, this can lead to areas of damage to the skin. It is therefore important that your garment does not wrinkle. As always, first check garment measurements are correct for your limb. For example, the garment chosen may be too long – either you or your clinician should check your measurements against the manufacturers' leg lengths. Not all products will be the same, so find the one that fits your measurements best. If your garment is too long, don't be tempted to fold it to solve the problem, as two layers means twice as much compression in that area. This can lead to skin damage and restricted blood flow and could result in swelling above the fold. It's much better to have a garment that fits.

When first putting on your garment, each day, make sure the material of garment is evenly stretched over limb, smoothing out any crinkles. A good way to smooth out your hosiery is to wear a pair of household rubber gloves and smooth out the material as you apply. If this doesn't help, you may need to consider an alternative garment. 

The advice given here is for commonly encountered compression problems and is in no way prescriptive. If you are concerned or unsure in anyway, please seek expert advice. Before wearing compression, it is advisable to undergo a thorough clinical assessment to make sure it is suitable for you, that you select the right garment, and that it fits properly.



Need an innovative compression product? It's a wrap!

If you struggle to tolerate compression bandaging, simply want freedom from regular bandage changes and dependence on nurse visits, or find hosiery difficult to apply, a compression wrap might just be the answer.

Compression wraps are the new kids on the block, and offer an innovative, wearer-friendly alternative to compression bandaging.

Although compression bandaging is proven to heal venous leg ulcers and reduce the swelling associated with lymphoedema and chronic oedema, it is also known to be uncomfortable and hot for some wearers. Problems such as bandage slippage as swelling reduces can mean the bandaging is ineffective until the next nurse visit to reapply. As limb volume can change throughout the day in some wearers, this can result in the need for daily nurse visits. While bandaging is worn, the wearer is unable to participate in daily routines that many of us take for granted such as bathing or showering and even wearing the shoes and clothes we like. And we won't even mention the itching! It's no wonder



The joy of showering in hot weather shouldn't be taken for granted.

so many people find compression bandaging hard to tolerate, especially in the summer months.

Wraps, as the name suggests, are compression systems that are wrapped around the limb and fastened using VELCRO® straps. They can be tightened or loosened as needed,

for example, if swelling reduces or increases over time. Most wraps have features to check that the compression being delivered is correct following application and adjustment, so it's hard to go wrong. They can be easily applied by the wearer, or a carer, reducing dependence on nurse visits for re-bandaging. Wraps are also ideal for people who are eligible to wear hosiery, but just can't get it on and off without a daily struggle.

If you are interested in trying a compression wrap, discuss it with your clinician and get the solution to your compression problems all wrapped up!





easywrap®

Even Jeans...
easywrap's low profile design means that it can be worn comfortably under most everyday clothing and footwear.



Haddenham **easywrap** is a UK patented* compression wrap system for the treatment of lymphoedema, chronic oedema and various other swelling related conditions.

www.easywrap.info

01844 208842

sales@hadhealth.com

*www.easywrap.info/patents



AVAILABLE
ON DRUG TARIFF





Product name: Juzo® Compression Wrap
Manufacturer: Juzo



- VELCRO® brand fasteners
- Short-stretch properties; therapeutic working and tolerable lower resting pressure
- Worn with liner, included
- Foot Wrap and Calf Wrap, both delivering between

30–60mmHg of compression

- Special indentations prevent swelling between the straps
- Reversible: black on one side, beige on reverse
- For patients with venous disorders such as varicosities, chronic venous insufficiency, venous leg ulcers, post-thrombotic syndrome and pre- and post-venous surgery.

Product name: juxtacures®
Manufacturer: Medi UK

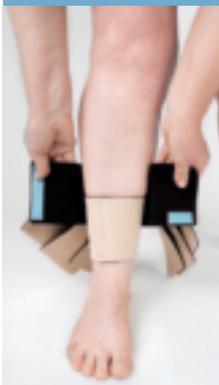


- VELCRO® brand fasteners
- Short-stretch properties; therapeutic working and tolerable lower resting pressure
- Tram lines on

the wrap and a measuring card make up the unique Built-In Pressure System™ that enables the amount of compression delivered to be checked

- Juxta-Fit Lower Legging is available for the management of lymphoedema in two lengths, petite and standard, and 5 sizes from small to XXL
- JuxtaLite is available for the management of venous conditions.

Product name: ReadyWrap™
Manufacturer: Lohmann & Rauscher



- Colour-coded VELCRO® brand fasteners
- Low profile design
- Short-stretch properties; therapeutic working and tolerable lower resting pressure
- 50% overlapping straps for oedema containment and control that can be

adjusted to accommodate fluctuating limb volume

- Available for lower and upper extremities in beige or black.

Product name: JOBST® FarrowWrap®
Manufacturer: BSN Medical



- VELCRO® brand fasteners
- Short-stretch properties; therapeutic working and tolerable lower resting pressure
- Overlapping straps for oedema containment and control that can

be adjusted to accommodate fluctuating limb circumferences

- Available as a footpiece, leg piece and thigh piece, in light, classic and strong fabrics, which deliver three differing amounts of compression
- Beige colour.



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A compression wrap gave me back my independence

I have had a whole range of problems with my legs; swelling, lymphoedema, blisters, ulcers (leg and feet) and peripheral neuropathy caused by type 2 diabetes. The neuropathy means my skin's surface is numb so I feel no pain, although I do have pain in my upper thighs because of poor circulation. The neuropathy is a danger in itself — in the past I have rolled a Xerox machine over my feet when working and haven't even noticed the damage.



Derek Nicholls

My limbs were managed with compression bandages and Ichthopaste. However, the bandages could take up to one and a half hours to apply and would often slip and effectively form a tourniquet. So, my only option was to cut off the bandages and wait for them to be reapplied by the district nurses at their next visit.

Juxtacures®, a compression wrap, was suggested to me by Sue Elvin, the consultant district nurse, as a solution to this problem, and I agreed to give it a try.

The system was quick to apply, comfortable, adjustable, and easy to remove so I could shower when I wished. I soon

learned how to apply juxtacures correctly myself. Its easy when you know how. I start from the bottom of my leg at the ankle and work my way up, attaching the VELCRO® straps as I go so that they are comfortable. Then, it is easy to establish that its delivering the right amount of compression with the measuring card.

In the mornings my legs are often thinner due to being elevated overnight; they then swell during the day. Previ-

ous bandages could not be adjusted, whereas juxtacures allows me to adjust the compression throughout the day, for instance, when I am standing up or sitting down.

My legs are now almost back to their normal size, with no ulcers, blisters or swelling. Juxtacures quickly helped to reduce swelling, helping with everyday things like fitting in my shoes and clothing.

My compression wrap set me free from needing carers and gave me back my independence. It meant I could reduce the frequency of district nurse visits from twice a week to once a month. 

The least expensive
physical debridement product
on the drug tariff

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UCS™ Debridement

Pre-moistened debridement cloth for
all skin and wound treatment.

- Gentle, soft loop technology and a specially formulated solution addressing biofilm and improving wound healing
- Enables access to the most difficult to reach wounds
- Sterile and ready to use

How will you buy yours?

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|--------------------------------------|----------|
| NHSSC | ELZ746 |
| FP10 PIP | 384-4271 |
| Scottish Contract PECOS | 217106 |
| Direct from medi UK | DT500 |
| T. 01432 373500 sales@mediuk.co.uk | |

Discover the medi Wound Care Therapy Chain within the
medi World of Compression.

medi
World of
Compression
since 1951



Leg Clubs[®]: lower-limb care in a friendly social setting

There are currently 30 Leg Clubs scattered throughout the UK. Each Leg Club aims to provide best practice treatment for people with leg ulcers and related problems in a social, friendly, non-medical community-based setting. Every Leg Club aims to empower patients (known as members) to become involved in their care, while providing empathy and peer-support.

Leg Clubs typically meet once a week, but in some areas the Club is held twice weekly. The Clubs are community based and held in settings such as a village or church hall or local community centre. No appointments are required during opening hours, details of which can be found on the Leg Club website or locally through the GP surgery or community nurse.

In some venues, transport can be arranged to and from the club, through Dial a Ride or volunteers, depending on the arrangements made between the Leg Club team and community. Parking is usually available at all Clubs.

When attending a Leg Club, you will be made to feel extremely welcome by the receptionist and members.

The receptionist is usually a volunteer who may well have experienced life with a leg-related problem. The receptionist will take details of why you are attending, and you will be given a number so you know when you are going to be seen. The waiting environment is welcoming and you will be introduced to other members, and the volunteer responsible for refreshments will ensure you enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.



The Leg Club set up is one of a social club, where people with leg-related problems can participate as much or as little as they wish. Some members stay after treatment to have a drink and to chat with other members.

All members are seen holistically and their social and psychological needs addressed. Care is delivered in a relaxed, informal atmosphere in which comradeship, empathy and peer support are very evident.

Treatment is undertaken collectively in a separate area where two or three people can have their legs washed and dressed in the same room. This gives them the opportunity to compare healing and treatments, should they wish to do so. Members are encouraged to discuss treatment issues with the nursing team and other Club members. Of course, each Leg Club also provides facilities for those who prefer to have treatment in private.

The social element of the Leg Club encourages members with similar conditions to talk openly about their experiences. Many people find the knowledge that they are not alone and that others are experiencing the same or similar conditions very reassuring.

Members have found that attending a Leg Club has given them a sense of purpose. The formation of friendships, and the network of mutual support gives members a strong sense of motivation as well as trust, confidence,



and understanding of their treatment. Members have commented:

'It does me quite a lot of good just being able to get away from my own misery'

'I know I am still going to have quite a lot of pain but when I am with other people I can forget about myself'

'The whole atmosphere at the club was upbeat and positive, we no longer felt alone. I am no longer depressed, my ulcer has healed, and I will be returning to work. I feel as though I have been given my life back.'

If you would like to make new friends while receiving treatment for your lower limb(s), speak to your nurse or visit the Leg Club website to find out more. 

Find your local Leg Club

If you would like to attend a Leg Club visit:

www.legclub.org/leg-club-directory/United-Kingdom



Difficulties with getting the right compression garment quickly?

Difficulties in getting the right compression garment dispensed within a short time frame are all too common for patients with lymphoedema, leading to lots of pharmacy trips, frustration and delays in the start of treatment. Here, leading lymphoedema clinicians outline why the problems occur and what can be done to improve things.



Melanie Thomas is National Clinical Lead for Lymphoedema in Wales

“**C**urrently all people with lymphoedema in Wales can access a local lymphoedema service which offers assessment and treatment, as The Welsh Government funded a National Lymphoedema Service in 2011. Compression garments are one of the main components of treatment as they help to support the limb and reduce swelling.

Since March 2006, compression garments have been available on prescription via the FP10. The FP10 is a process where patients can receive medication or a compression garment via a prescription from their General Practitioner or Lymphoedema Specialist to take to a pharmacist for dispensing.

Following complaints from patients that the wrong garments were being issued, Lymphoedema Network Wales undertook an audit which highlighted that 50% of compression garment prescriptions were dispensed incorrectly. Some of the garments issued caused harm. For example, a made to measure garment was prescribed because a patient's limb was larger than standard size, but she was given a ready to wear garment that was extremely small. Some garments prescribed for arm lymphoedema were dispensed in the wrong style or shape that caused swelling into the hand or thigh region. In addition, the patients had to wait a long



time to receive their garment; the average time was an unacceptable 42 days.

Through communication and collaboration with the Community Pharmacies, we established a project to reduce waste, harm and variation. This included the introduction of a simple communication form given to the patients and faxed to the patient's community pharmacist. This approach resulted in a reduction of the time waiting for a garment to 10 days and a reduction of garments wrongly dispensed from 50% to 5%. Improving communication and sharing of pertinent knowledge with the right people at the right time made a significant improvement to patient care.

Lymphoedema Network Wales undertook an audit which highlighted that 50% of compression garment prescriptions were dispensed incorrectly.

It is of vital importance that patients understand what garments are being ordered for them and from which company. The communication form enables the patient to be kept fully informed of their treatment and provides written confirmation

of product description, size, colour and manufacturer's details.

Many patients think that the prescribing process is long winded and cannot understand

why lymphoedema specialists can't provide the right garment in their clinic appointment. Logically this makes sense thus in Wales we are exploring whether a more streamlined process can occur." 



Caitriona O'Neill is Lymphoedema Lead, Accelerate CIC

“Compression hosiery can pose many challenges for clinicians, there are over 10,000 products on prescription with more coming out each year. With this in mind there are often delays with prescribing largely due to the complexities and the varied options that prescribers have to work with.

These delays have a burden of cost in that patients can deteriorate or they are being managed in unnecessary bandaging until such time as the hosiery arrives.



Within our local area we are about to pilot a scheme within one CCG where the clinicians can order garments direct. The predicted benefits of this are reduced GP time and frustration, reduced clinician time in making and following up on requests, reduced errors and, most importantly, the patient will get the required items in a timely fashion without any delays to treatment. Sourcing solutions is a must within this field as it will allow for the varied

garments required to be acquired for the patient quickly, seamlessly and without any errors or switching of products.

Throughout, the main consideration always needs to be our patients. They want and need a good fit so that they are comfortable, that the garment can be seen to have a clinical effect and that they can apply their garment easily. It should not be a burdensome process for them.” 



Mary Woods is Lead Nurse Lymphoedema Services, The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust

“Difficulties can arise with patients obtaining the correct compression garment on prescription. It is great that so many products are available now, but the prescribing is not easy for GPs and other prescribers who cannot easily identify the requested product code on some ordering systems. This can lead to the patient being prescribed an incorrect garment that could be detrimental to the management of their lymphoedema.

Daylong have been supportive in trying to resolve the problem and are keen to work towards a solution.” 

Contact us

If you would like to comment on this or any other features or contribute to a future edition of *In this together*

Please write to us at editorial@Daylong.co.uk

It's a wrap!

You don't have to go to the movies to be amazed...

SIGVARIS



The SIGVARIS Compre Range

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My compression community



Mary Woods is Lead Nurse Lymphoedema Services, Therapy Services, The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust

I qualified as a registered nurse in 1980 and quickly found my way into caring for patients with cancer. After working as a ward sister for several years, during which time I looked after patients with lymphoedema, I became a lymphoedema specialist in 1990. In the early days, we supplied compression garments for the management of lymphoedema from our stock room. The choice was fairly limited but over the years, a larger variety of garments has become available with different materials, colours and styles. Most garments can now be obtained on prescription from the patient's GP.

The patients we treat have cancer-related lymphoedema occurring as a result of treatment for cancer, or sometimes due to the cancer itself. Swelling might be in the legs, arms, breast, head and neck, or central part of the body. We run lymphoedema clinics every day with approximately 6-8 patients booked and room for additional, more urgent patients if required. Some patients can also be reviewed by telephone assessment with one of the therapists, if suitable.

My working day is typically very varied with no two days the same. I may spend the day seeing patients in clinic, teaching other health care professionals, meeting with staff regarding professional and service development or working on a project.

At the start of the day I usually meet with the team to look at the diary and review the clinic bookings that we have for the day. I ensure that any problems are identified and discussed and that the team are fully supported. Patients with lymphoedema require education to enable them to manage their swelling so we offer appointments that enable



us to fully assess their individual needs and advise them about how they can manage their lymphoedema. As part of their treatment, this usually involves choosing a compression garment with a patient and making sure that it is acceptable to them and will also improve their swelling. There are many garments to choose from now with different materials, colours and compression classes, so knowledge of what is available and what may be clinically appropriate is essential. The patient is advised to wear their compression garment every day, so it is important that their views are considered to make sure they are able to do this.

Some patients require garments of a stiffer material and for others a round knit garment may be more appropriate. Patients may prefer a particular colour or a garment that has a grip top so all possible choices are discussed with them. As new products become available we incorporate them into our discussion with the patient too when clinically relevant.

We encourage patients to be referred to us as soon as lymphoedema is noticed because early treatment is more successful. This may avoid the need for more complex treatment. However, difficulties can

arise with patients obtaining the correct compression garment on prescription. It is really good that there are so many garments available on prescription now, but the prescribing is not easy for GPs who cannot identify the requested garment by

product code on their prescribing systems. This can lead to the patient being prescribed an incorrect garment which can be detrimental to the management of their lymphoedema

and a waste of resources. We have been trying to address this problem by improving the information we provide to GPs and patients about the garment they require but until the prescribing systems are all able to identify compression garments by product code or PIP code the problem is likely to continue.

I love the variety of my job. As a nurse I am passionate about caring for patients and improving their quality of life. My role enables me to do this through my direct clinical contact with patients and also indirectly through the education and support of my team and other health care professionals. I also enjoy having a voice within the wider context of health care through discussions and projects at national and international level aimed at initiating change and improved care for patients. 

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Hear ye, hear ye: a trip down memory lane

My primary lymphoedema presented when I was 13 years old. Up came my left ankle, for no obvious reason, and it's been swollen ever since.

After exploratory surgery, the medics diagnosed 'inflamed tendon of the tibia', and sent me off to St. Thomas's. There, the amazing Professor Kinmonth, laconic but kind, with his gaggle of junior doctors around him, put a frightened 14-year-old at ease with brusque humour. I was in an adult male ward, with 30 patients in two facing-rows, with incredibly tall and well-spoken nurses, who had to kneel on the marble floors 3 times a day for prayers.

Professor Kinmonth arranged for me to have a deep green dye injected into my



Peter White is a Town Crier and Lymphoedema Support Network Member.

lymphatics, and I spent some 12 hours sparked out and being occasionally x-rayed to test the progress of the dye. This was a fairly novel approach then as an unprepared nurse nearly dropped my deep green specimen when she came to collect it. I went back to school...looking only pale green, and apparently the dye was discernible on x-ray months later.

The result? I was told that I had a 'shortage of lymphatic vessels'. It was 1963. No treatment, just pink support stockings, the end of my bed elevated, and hefty massage using talcum powder which was brutal compared to modern approaches; all were quickly abandoned.

Later in life I adopted compression hosiery, now mercifully black in colour. And my visit to the annual Lymphoedema Support Network (LSN) Conference a few years ago finally convinced me to give up the diuretic my GP had me popping for 25 years to no good effect. Thank you LSN: what a relief!

I now wear compression hosiery; closed toe and knee length on both legs and they manage my condition well. 🙏

We would love to hear your experiences; please send them to editorial@daylong.co.uk



The Lymphoedema Support Network

The Lymphoedema Support Network (LSN) has been helping people with the condition for over 25 years. During this time it has provided information and support to those living with or affected by lymphoedema or chronic oedema. Although it is now an award-winning charity, it is still run by people with lymphoedema, for people with lymphoedema.

Today the LSN is the largest information resource for lymphoedema in the UK, producing an on-going series of fact sheets for patients, which are also used in hospitals and lymphoedema clinics. Two self-help DVDs have been produced for patients. In addition, the charity operates an information and support telephone line, produces a quarterly newsletter, maintains a website and campaigns nationally for improved standards of care. It supports the work of researchers and is at the forefront of educating GPs and other

healthcare professionals via two online learning modules. The LSN also promotes the formation of self-help support groups around the country. The groups provide information and mutual support for people with lymphoedema, their families and carers and are generally based in lymphoedema clinics or local centres.

The LSN is a small charity that receives no funding from government or the NHS; it is totally dependent on supporters to fund its work. By joining the LSN you will be joining the largest lymphoedema community in the UK. 

Join the LSN

If you would like to know more about the LSN, the local support groups or become a member, visit:

www.lymphoedema.org



You've got to be in it to swim it!

Swimming is a great activity for improving your health and wellbeing whatever your level of fitness. Here we explain the many benefits of taking a dip, so you can be sure to make a splash this summer!

1. It involves all your major muscle groups

All the major muscles are engaged when you go swimming giving you a full body workout. Using a variety of different strokes will maximise the number of muscles used. You don't need to pound the lanes to feel the benefit; a gentle swim is just fine to start with. Walking in the pool or doing aqua aerobics are great alternatives.

2. It's a great workout for your heart

Swimming on a regular basis has been shown to have many cardiovascular benefits including reduced blood pressure and a lower heart rate.

3. It boosts metabolism to give you more energy

Swimming for a recommended 30 minutes three times per week also raises your metabolism, giving you an energy boost.

4. It's gentle on joints

Water supports up to 90 per cent of the body's weight, making it a great activity for people who can't engage in high-impact exercise such as running,

because of joint problems or heavy limbs caused by lymphoedema. The Arthritis Foundation recommends finding the stroke that is comfortable for your joints, and suggests using swimming aids such as kickboards and pull-buoys to help you to modify strokes if needed.

5. It has great mental health benefits

A light swim for just 30 minutes three times a week can have a huge positive impact on your mental wellbeing. Swimming has been proven to reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and improve general mood and sleep patterns. It only takes a gentle swim to feel the benefits.

6. It's a calorie cruncher!

Swimming is one of the most effective ways to burn calories. A gentle swim can burn over 200 calories in just half an hour, more than double that of walking. If you are still finding it a struggle, consider your technique; you may benefit from a couple of lessons to polish up your technique to improve your efficiency.



Alison Hopkins, Chief Executive of Accelerate CIC advises:

'Swimming is an excellent and important way of keeping fit. It helps all aspects of mobility and lymphatic drainage. However, some open wounds will prevent this activity as do many compression bandage regimens because of the reliance on others to apply. However, if you wear hosiery, a leg ulcer should not necessarily stop you! If you have a small ulcer, obtain a simple film and pad dressing that is waterproof. Apply before your swim so it is fresh and adheres well. Remove after your swim and redress with your usual dressing. If you have wide spread ulcers or erosions we would caution against swimming as an activity until clear. It may be beneficial to swim wearing your compression garment to maximise the benefits of exercise. Keep a spare one for this purpose, as the fabric may be damaged by chlorine.'



Swimming for success

Swimming programmes for every ability and apps to track your progress are available for free online.

[www.swimbritain.co.uk/
preparation/training-programmes](http://www.swimbritain.co.uk/preparation/training-programmes)

Tips for swimming success

Convinced of the benefits? Now you just need to start. A common problem is the equivalent of trying to run before you can walk! Remember that training in water is different to land training. The lying down position in the water means your cardiovascular system and muscles have to adapt to the new way of working so go easy and build up to your target gradually.

To maximise the benefits of your workout and to stop you getting bored, swim using different strokes, and at different intensities. Couple this with a warm up and cool down and before you know it, your 30 minutes will be up! There are lots of free swimming programmes available online to give you guidance and goals to work towards (see above). If you are keen but a little shy, check out the timetable at your local pool. There may be special male-only and female-only sessions timetabled which you may prefer. Consider swimming as a great way to exercise for a lifetime. 





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www.daylong.co.uk/prescriptions to see how we can help you and your patients.**

* A survey carried out by the **All Wales Lymphoedema Service (2013)** in which 100 dispensed prescriptions were analysed.

To see the report: Log onto www2.nphs.wales
Search under L for **Lymphoedema**
Click on: **AWLS and CPW Collab ToR**
Scroll down to: **Note 1.4**

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