

Question and Answer

independently putting on and off compression stockings

1

Why am I no longer receiving help from community nursing service with putting on and taking off compression stockings?

You can put on and take off your compression stockings yourself, if necessary with the help of an aid. This saves time: you no longer need to wait for a caregiver or someone else to come by. Doing it yourself gives you freedom: you decide when to put them on and take them off. And since caregivers can help others, you contribute to maintaining care for everyone who needs it, now and in the future. Of course, caregivers help people who cannot put on or take off their stockings themselves due to medical or other reasons.

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How can I put on and take off my compression stockings?

In [this video](#), you can see step-by-step instructions for putting on and taking off your compression stockings. Gloves with extra grip and a non-slip mat can help you with this, and you can purchase them yourself. The professional who fits the stockings (the compression therapist) explains how to put on and take off the stockings independently, with or without a simple tool. It's wise to ask a partner or friend to attend this explanation with you.*

* For the word 'compression therapist,' the terms 'bandage specialist' or 'fitter' are also sometimes used

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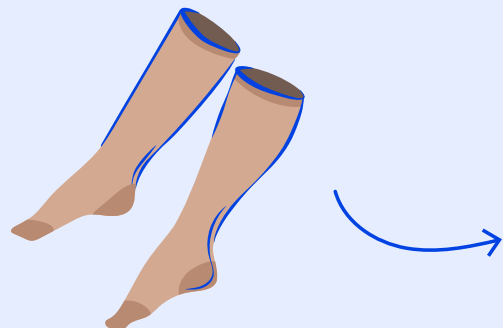
What if I can't put on and take off my compression stockings independently?

If you can't manage on your own after guidance and practice with a compression therapist, first see if someone in your surroundings can help. If there is no one to help, you can ask an occupational therapist. They can assess what's needed for you to do it yourself or with the help of a caregiver and can also practice with you the first time. Various tools are available, and the occupational therapist can order one for you.

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Which aid is suitable?

The suitable aid depends on various factors, such as the strength in your hands, your flexibility, and whether you can reach your toes. [This card](#) provides information on common aids and shows which aid is most suitable for each situation. An occupational therapist can provide advice on this.



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Where can I get the aids?

If you need an aid, you can obtain one through a compression therapist (simple aid) or an occupational therapist (more complex aid). If they order the aid for you, it is usually covered by health insurance. You can also choose to purchase an aid yourself from a home care store, in which case you will pay for it yourself.

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Who will practice with me so I can use the aid independently?

You can practice using the aid by yourself or with a family member or someone in your environment. If you want to ask someone to temporarily help you practice, you can use the '[practice buddy](#)' card. This card explains what is expected from the 'practice buddy.' The practice buddy helps you temporarily with putting on and taking off compression stockings until you can do it yourself.

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Who can I ask to be my practice buddy?

Asking for help is not always easy. However, you will find that people are often happy to help, especially if it's temporary. You can ask family members, friends, neighbors, someone from a club you belong to, a former colleague, or a friend's daughter. Your network is often larger than you think.

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What is expected of a practice buddy?

The practice buddy is present the first time you practice with the occupational therapist with the stockings. They observe so they understand how to put on and take off the stockings. After that, the practice buddy visits daily to practice with you so you can independently put on and take off your stockings with the aid. One or two practice sessions may be enough, but more frequent visits might be needed. It's rare for this support to last longer than two weeks.

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Do I need a referral?

To get compression stockings, you need a referral to the compression therapist who will measure them for you. This referral usually comes from your doctor. Often, no referral is needed to make an appointment with an occupational therapist, and you can contact them directly. There are a few exceptions; your health insurer or occupational therapist can provide more information.

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Do I have to pay for the aid or the occupational therapist myself?

No, if you can put on and take off your compression stockings independently with the aid, the cost of the aid is usually reimbursed by your health insurer. The consultation with the occupational therapist is also covered by the health insurer (up to a maximum of 10 hours per year). Both reimbursements are subject to certain conditions, which your health insurer can tell you more about.



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Who decides if I can receive professional care if I am unable to put on and take off the compression stockings by myself?

The community nurse assesses your personal situation and decides whether professional care is necessary. The general practitioner or specialist does not make this decision, in any case.

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Will I no longer receive professional help with putting on and taking off compression stockings?

Have you tried it yourself first and then with an occupational therapist? If this assistance does not help, the community nurse will assess how best to support you with putting on and taking off the compression stockings.

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When should I replace my compression stockings?

The health insurer reimburses new compression stockings once a year.

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Who should I contact if I experience complaints while wearing my compression stockings or have questions?

If you experience discomfort while wearing your compression stockings, you can contact the professional who referred you for the stockings (usually your doctor). If the complaints are about the stockings themselves, you can contact the compression therapist.

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I am currently being bandaged. Are compression stockings still necessary?

Bandaging is necessary to remove the moisture from your legs. Once the moisture is gone, compression stockings will be fitted. It is then important to continue bandaging; otherwise, the moisture may return, and the stockings will not fit. Not everyone needs to be bandaged. Your doctor will assess this. It is important that you really start wearing your compression stockings for the sake of your health and to prevent the moisture from returning to your legs.

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Do I have to keep wearing my compression stockings forever?

It is always good to continue asking yourself whether wearing the compression stockings is still necessary. Your health situation does not necessarily have to deteriorate as you age. If you doubt the benefit of the compression stockings, discuss it with your doctor.