

Anti-embolism stockings

T.E.D (Thrombo Embolic Deterrent)

Information for patients

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

What are anti-embolism stockings?

Anti-embolism stockings are stockings made from elastic and can be either thigh or knee length. These are also known as T.E.D stockings.

Anti-embolism stockings reduce the risk of blood clots forming in your legs whilst you are in hospital and less active than normal. Anti-embolism stockings improve the return of blood in the leg veins during periods of inactivity. They should be worn throughout your hospital stay.

At home, you should wear them until you return to your normal level of mobility. When you are discharged, your nurse will give you further advice about this.

How do you know the correct size of the stockings?

Your legs will be measured before the anti-embolism stockings are fitted. This will be done by a trained nurse. They will take a measurement at the widest part of your calf.

This will determine the correct size of stocking required.

How do anti-embolism stockings work?

The stockings squeeze your leg from the ankle to the knee, helping the blood to return more quickly. This makes blood clotting less likely.

The stockings reduce blood clots from forming in patients who have had surgery, are on bed rest or are taking certain medicines.

How do I put on the stockings?

You should:

- insert your hand into the stocking as far as the heel.
- keep your hand inside, turn the stocking inside out to the heel.
- put the stocking over your foot and heel. The centre of your heel should be over the heel pocket of the stocking.
- find that the inspection hole will be under your foot, usually under your toes providing the heel fits correctly. In some cases, the stocking overlaps the foot and this is acceptable.
- pull the stocking up and fit it around your ankle and calf.
- pull the remaining stocking up to its full length and make sure there are no wrinkles.
- not turn the stocking over at the knee, when wearing knee length stockings, as this can result in restricting your blood flow and could cause tissue damage.

These stockings can be difficult to put on. Therefore, the elderly and people with a disability may need some help from a carer or relative.

What can I do to help myself?

You must:

- report any new pain or discomfort in your feet, legs or skin caused by the stockings.

- report any swelling of your leg to staff while you are in hospital, or to your GP practice if you are at home, as your legs will need to be re-measured and the need for stockings reviewed.
- let your doctor know or contact the department where you were given the stockings if you notice itching or a rash. You may be allergic to the elastic fibres in the stockings.
- not roll your stockings down as this can cause a restriction of blood flow.
- take your stockings off once a day to check the condition of your skin and to wash your feet and legs.
- make sure you are wearing slippers or shoes when moving around as the stockings can be very slippery on hard floors.

How do I look after my stockings?

If your doctor or nurse has told you to carry on wearing your stockings at home remember to:

- put on clean stockings at least every 3 days (or earlier if the stockings are dirty). The ward will have provided you with a second pair of stockings if you need them.
- wash the stockings by hand, or in a machine at no more than 40° centigrade, and **do not** use bleach.
- spin or air dry your stockings, but do not tumble dry, hand wring or iron them.

If air drying the stockings you are advised to dry them flat, as the weight of the water may pull the stocking out of shape.

- avoid using greasy ointments, oils and lanolin on your skin (where possible) while wearing the anti-embolism stockings (including before and after they are put on), as this could break down the stocking fibres and reduce their effectiveness.
- only use the stockings yourself, as the correct size is given to you depending on your leg measurement. The stockings should not be passed on to family members or friends.

Can all patients wear anti-embolism stockings?

You should not be offered anti-embolism stockings if:

- you have recently had a stroke.
- you have peripheral arterial disease (narrowing or blockage) of the arteries leading to your legs).
- you have peripheral neuropathy (damage to the sensory nerves).
- you recently had a skin graft.
- you have eczema or fragile skin on your legs.
- you have an allergy to the stocking material.
- you have fluid on your lungs caused by heart failure.
- your legs are very swollen.
- a good stocking fit cannot be achieved.

Please tell a doctor or nurse caring for you if you think that any of the above may apply to you.

This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk

Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we're doing well or if there's anything which we can improve, that's why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

telephone: 01642 624719

Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 4.00pm

Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

freephone: 0800 092 0084

Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

telephone: 01642 617617

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30pm – 4.30pm. The office is based on the ground floor at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection, Caldicott and Disclosure Policy (IG5) in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation (General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

telephone: 01642 383551 or email: information.governance@nth.nhs.uk

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