

How to wrap your leg to decrease lymphatic swelling using compression bandaging

Assemble Materials

PER LEG:

- One 12 cm short stretch bandage
- One 10 cm short stretch bandage
- One 8 cm short stretch bandage
- 1 roll of foam for skin protection

Paper tape
Lotion



1. Materials



2. Apply lotion



3. using the "snail" position, start foam layer at the base of foot.



4. Wrap foam layer around foot and up leg, leaving heel exposed.



5. Ending foam wrap just below the knee



6. Using the "snail" method, start at the base of the foot, circling the top of foot 2 times. Using 8 cm bandage.



7. then a "figure 8" across the heel



8. Continue in a circular pattern over the heel and up the leg. ****KEEP HEEL FLEXED**** for proper positioning and foot function.



9. Use tape to secure 1st bandage



10. Start 2nd bandage (10 cm) overlapping previous bandage



11. Wrap the leg with 50% overlap between layers of wrap.



12. Secure 2nd bandage with tape.



13. Start 3rd bandage (12 cm) just above the ankle, wrapping up the leg in a circular pattern, overlapping layers of bandages by 50%. The bandage should not touch the skin, so stop the bandage layer just short of the foam layer.



Evidence based research supporting compression wrapping for the management of lymphedema:

“Complex decongestive therapy (CDT) is a multifaceted management approach, which is considered the international therapeutic ‘gold standard’ for lymphedema by many societies and lymphedema experts. By incorporating lymphatic massage, known as manual lymphatic drainage (MLD), with compression bandaging and exercises, the CDT program is composed of 2 phases: treatment phase (Phase I) then a maintenance phase (Phase II)” (Bittar et al., 2020, p.86).

“Compression bandaging is a vital component of CDT. Maximum lymphedema reduction during therapy and maintaining its effect cannot be achieved without it” (Zasadzka et al., 2018, p. 929).

References

Bittar, S., Simman, R., & Lurie, F. (2020). Lymphedema: A practical approach and clinical update. *Wounds: A Compendium of Clinical Research and Practice*, 32(3), 86–92.

Zasadzka, E., Trzmiel, T., Kleczewska, M., & Pawlaczyk, M. (2018). Comparison of the effectiveness of complex decongestive therapy and compression bandaging as a method of treatment of lymphedema in the elderly. *Clinical Interventions in Aging*, Volume 13, 929–934. <https://doi.org/10.2147/cia.s159380>