

Compression Socks

● SKILL SNAPSHOT

Purpose

- Provides graduated external pressure to improve venous return and reduce edema or venous stasis.

When to use

- Ordered for venous insufficiency, dependent edema, or VTE prevention when arterial perfusion is adequate.

Supplies needed

- Correct ordered size/compression; measuring tape; gloves if needed; donning aid; skin moisturizer used at a separate time.

● PREP + PATIENT SETUP

- Verify order, compression strength, size, and contraindications.
- Assess legs/feet for color, temperature, pulses, cap refill, sensation, edema, wounds, and pain.
- Measure per manufacturer; apply in morning or

● VAULT TIP

- Apply before dependent swelling develops. If the stocking wrinkles, remove and reapply - do not leave a pressure ridge.

● STEP-BY-STEP

1. Hand hygiene; identify patient; explain purpose and schedule.
2. Ensure skin is clean and fully dry. Cover dressings smoothly.
3. Turn stocking inside out to the heel, leaving the foot portion accessible.
4. Place toes into foot section and position heel correctly in the heel pocket.
5. Gently pull/roll stocking over ankle and calf; avoid twisting or dragging fragile skin.
6. Smooth material upward in small sections. Do not pull from the top band.
7. Keep fabric evenly distributed with no wrinkles, folds, or rolled edge.
8. For thigh-high garments, position top as directed; never fold it down.
9. Reassess toes/foot for color, warmth, capillary refill, sensation, pain, and swelling.
10. Verify correct compression and that the patient can move comfortably.
11. Remove at the ordered interval for skin inspection and hygiene; reapply correctly.
12. Teach daily skin checks, garment care, replacement schedule, and symptoms to report.

● SAFETY REMINDERS

- Do not apply over suspected acute arterial insufficiency or without ordered vascular evaluation.
- Remove and assess for new pain, numbness, coolness, pallor/cyanosis, or worsening swelling.
- Avoid wrinkles and rolled bands; they create focal pressure.
- Do not massage a leg with suspected DVT.

● COMMON MISTAKES

- Guessing size instead of measuring.
- Folding or rolling the top.
- Applying over damp lotion or bunched dressings.
- Failing to inspect heels and pressure points.

● DOCUMENTATION

- Order/size/compression level and time applied.
- Baseline and post-application neurovascular status.
- Edema, skin condition, wounds/dressings.
- Removal schedule and tolerance.
- Teaching and symptoms reported.