

Compression for lipoedema (lipalgia syndrome):

A step-by-step guide for prescribers

when referring patients to a lymphoedema/oedema clinic is not possible

1 Choose Brand

Most commonly prescribed brands: Jobst, Juzo, Medi, Haddenham, Lipoelastic, Sigvaris

2 Select garment type

Most prescribed garment styles (in order) are:

Tights



Leggings



Below-knee socks



Thigh-high stockings



Arm sleeves



Specialists commonly choose Lipoelastic leggings, Juzo Soft tights or Haddenham Veni footless tights for new patients.

3 Check measurement guidance for brand/garment chosen and measure patient carefully

- Accurate measurements are essential to getting useful compression for your patients. Inaccurate measurements result in ill-fitting garments that are unlikely to be worn.
- Brands have different measuring locations, so check brand guidelines before measuring patients.
- Contact brand reps for advice and free measurement training at your surgery.
- Measuring tapes should normally be held tight without indenting the skin.

4 Choose standard-sized or made-to-measure

- Compression can be *ready-made* or *made-to-order* in 'standard' sizes (cheaper/quicker) or *made-to-measure* for non-standard sizes and additional options.
- For new patients, try *ready-made* compression garments first if available sizes and shapes are suitable (patient measurements must match ALL size chart dimensions for good fit).
- *Made-to-measure* garments may be more suitable for patients with skin folds, lumps, pendulous tissue, asymmetrical legs, or those requiring firmer fabric.

5 Choose fabric and/or compression class

- Low pressures are most suitable for supporting lipoedema tissue (e.g. class 1, class 2 or 'support').
- 'Firm' or 'high working pressure' fabrics will likely deliver high pressures and be difficult to don and doff.
- 'High-elastic knit' or 'soft' fabrics will likely provide gentler support, exert lower pressures and be easier to don and doff, particularly for people with arthritis, osteoporosis, etc.

6 Prescribe

Prescribe selected garments (for new prescriptions, check fit before prescribing second garment).

Follow up

- Our survey (n=373) showed over 20% of prescribed garments are not suitable, good measurement may help improve utilisation rates and different products may suit/fit different people.
- Referral to a Lymphoedema/oedema specialist clinic may be necessary for accurate measurement.

Links to lipoedema resources:



RCGP e-learning



Medi guide



Lipoelastic guide



Sigvaris guide



Feedback survey



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