



## FAQ's on Shape-to-Fit Compression Wear

### 1. How do I measure and what is the best time to measure?

The best time to measure for **Shape-to-Fit** support hose is in the morning, as opposed to later in the day when feet and legs may swell. Take two measurements: 1) at the smallest part of the ankle above the bone, and 2) at the widest part of the calf.

### 2. What compression level and what style stockings should patients buy?

Our literature contains some general guidelines you may want to review about compression levels. Look specifically for the chart that explains gentle, moderate and firm compression. You'll also see we have several styles to choose from. Compression levels are consistent across all styles, so allow your patients to choose from any of them to match their lifestyle and fashion needs.

### 3. How should compression wear be washed?

**Shape-to-Fit** compression wear should be washed in warm water (about 105 degrees) by hand, or in a laundry bag on gentle cycle in a non-phosphate detergent, such as Tide Free, All Free and Clear, or ERA (we DO NOT recommend Woolite). Warm water restores the memory of the yarn. Fabric softeners or bleach of any type should not be used. Most garments can be tumble dried on low setting, but all can be dried flat.

### 4. Will compression stockings get runs?

While medical grade compression wear is more substantial than regular hosiery, it still can and will get runs. We recommend you suggest your patients use donning gloves—both to make it easier to put the stockings on and to help protect the hosiery from snags. It's best to always use the balls of the fingers, as opposed to the finger tips. **Shape-to-Fit** offers donning gloves at a very reasonable price.

### 5. What can patients do to avoid getting wrinkles in their hosiery?

There are several reasons for wrinkles; one is that they are not pulled up far enough. Using **Shape-to-Fit** donning gloves will generally help alleviate this problem. When putting the hose on, they should be carefully pulled up until they are smooth on the legs, then gently massaged upwards with the gloves on to remove any wrinkles. The hose may need to be adjusted several times a day. Wrinkles may also occur if the socks are too big or too small.

**QUESTIONS?** Call Dr. Comfort Shape-to-Fit at (800) 556-5572.

**6. What can I do with a patient that just cannot get them on?**

Depending upon the compression level of the hose, a patient's flexibility, the strength in their hands, or their age/weight, they may not be able to get the support hose on (or off).

**Shape-to-Fit** has several donning techniques to assist in getting the hose on. We also have a donning stand and gloves, which can help a great deal.

**7. Will support stockings cut off circulation?**

When fit correctly, **Shape-to-Fit** gradient compression hose will not cut off circulation. The hose will provide the most compression at the ankle, then the compression decreases as it goes up to the top of the stocking. Adjusting the stockings several times throughout the day will maximize the gradient compression, while preventing rings around your legs.

**8. What can I do if my patient's stockings will not stay up?**

There are several reasons why compression hose may not stay up. The first being the hose are just too big. Some people buy larger hose because the compression was just too much. This simply does not work. The patient would be better off going down in compression level than up in size. The second reason is the age of the stockings. Compression wear will last approximately 4-6 months, after which they lose their compression and stretch out. Another reason is the way the patient is washing the stockings. **Shape-to-Fit** compression hose must be washed in warm water in a non-phosphate detergent. The use of a harsh detergent, fabric softener or bleach will ruin the stockings. Also, the patient should wash the stockings every time they wear them. On a male wearing thigh-highs, he may have a lot of hair around the top band of the hose, shaving this hair off will help the hose stay up much better. With thigh-highs that have silicone bands, after several weeks wear, apply some rubbing alcohol to the silicone with a cotton ball. This will clean the body oils from the dots and rejuvenate the stickiness. This may need to be done weekly. Be sure your patients stretch the stocking evenly all the way up the leg. If they overstretch the top of the stockings, they will slide down. If this happens, take the stockings down to the ankle and pull them up again, stretching evenly.

**9. How long should compression stockings last?**

Generally, a pair of **Shape-to-Fit** socks or stockings is designed to last 4-6 months. When the patient feels the stockings are much easier to put on, it is time to replace them.

**10. Do patients need a prescription to purchase support stockings?**

All **Shape-to-Fit** compression wear is approved by the FDA for over-the-counter sales, which do not require a doctor's prescription. Some facilities require a prescription on these as a matter of safety for those customers that do not know anything about compression wear and want the "strongest". Also, if a patient intends to request reimbursement from their insurance company, they will require a prescription.

**11. Can my patient wear support socks or support hose when they exercise?**

Yes, support socks or support hose should be worn when exercising to increase the circulation in the legs by working with the leg muscles. Support hose help maintain good leg health.

**12. Does Dr. Comfort sell seconds or inventory that is out of date?**

Dr. Comfort does not sell *Shape-to-Fit* seconds. When you receive your hose they are the “freshest” hose available.

**13. What size do I use if the patient’s ankle measures a “L” and their calf measures a “M”?**

First, make sure the measurements are taken in the morning, before any swelling might occur. Then, follow the ankle measurement, as this is where the compression starts.

However, when another pair is purchased, it is wise to remeasure because the swelling/edema might have decreased and therefore, the size might have changed.

**14. What size do I use if the patient’s ankle measures a “S” but the calf measures a “M”?**

Because we do not want anything to decrease circulation in the leg, it is best to choose the size that corresponds to the calf.

**15. Can patients sleep in their compression stockings?**

Generally, *Shape-to-Fit* stockings are made to be put on first thing in the morning and taken off when the patient goes to bed. Patients should only sleep in their hose when a doctor has instructed them to do so.

**16. What is the difference between gradient compression wear and anti-embolism hose?**

Anti-embolism stockings are designed for patients that are in bed and non-ambulatory (not walking around) to help prevent blood clotting in the veins of the legs. The anti-embolism stockings are generally designed with a 12-16 mmHg compression and are made for short duration of wear. These stockings are usually found in only white and generally have a hole in the toe area, which allows for observation by the nurse in the hospital. The anti-embolism hose are not designed for long term wear by a person who is up and about.

**17. Can patients go swimming in their compression hose?**

The chlorine in water will destroy the elastic in *Shape-to-Fit* hose. If a patient swims a lot, they should be sure to wash the chlorine off their body before donning the hose.

**18. If a patient wears custom hose and cannot afford them, is there an alternative?**

Many manufacturers have expanded their ready-to-wear sizes so there may now be an alternative to a patient’s custom hose. Large and Extra-large sizes are now available in *Shape-to-Fit* knee-high stockings to accommodate a large calf. These larger stockings are available in many fabrics and compressions. Sometimes, because of a patient’s special needs to contain edema or lymphedema, custom hose may be the only solution. If you are in doubt, a quick measurement check may be in order.