

Brought to you by

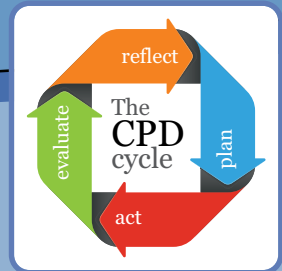


# Great Customer Care

– delivering quality and choice in compression hosiery

This module will help you to:

- Recap your knowledge of the Activa lines, styles and colours available in compression hosiery
- Consider the different leg conditions affecting various customers
- Match the appropriate garment to your customers' needs.



## Pharmacy and hosiery

Many customers with diagnosed venous and circulatory leg conditions are regular customers to the pharmacy for their repeat prescriptions for compression hosiery.

However, there are many more with undiagnosed conditions who would also benefit from wearing compression hosiery.

Pharmacists and their teams are well placed to help ensure customers are using the best and most appropriate garment for their condition.

The pharmacy team's role includes:

- Dealing with customers who are at risk of developing varicose veins
- Identifying those with undiagnosed varicose veins or oedema
- Reducing the risk of customers developing DVT
- Being aware of any customers whose hosiery is causing discomfort because it does not fit properly or who are having difficulty putting on their hosiery.



Watch our Customer Care video online at [activahealthcare.co.uk/guidevideo](http://activahealthcare.co.uk/guidevideo)

# British Standard hosiery

If a customer is not suffering from oedema (swelling), the compression hosiery recommendation would be:



## ACTIVA<sup>®</sup> British Standard hosiery

### This type of hosiery:

- Helps manage and prevent various venous leg conditions (spider veins, varicose veins and skin changes) where limb swelling is not apparent
- Supports and encourages venous return
- Is cosmetically very acceptable and available in different colours and styles:
  - Black, sand and honey colours
  - Below the knee and thigh lengths
  - Classes 1, 2 and 3.

### British Standard unisex socks

#### Unisex sock range:



#### Customer benefits:

- Looks just like an ordinary sock
- Comfortable, soft and silky
- Easy to put on
- Available on NHS prescription
- Available in different colours and styles:
  - Black patterned in Classes 1 and 2
  - Black in Classes 1 and 2
  - Brown in Class 2.

### British Standard below the knee and thigh length stockings

#### Customer benefits:

- Cosmetically appealing (like normal hosiery)
- Comfortable, soft and silky
- Large heel sack, making stocking easier to put on and no restriction at the toes
- Thigh stocking worn with a suspender belt
- Available in different colours and styles:
  - Black, sand and honey colours
  - Open or closed toe
  - Compression Classes 1, 2 and 3.

#### Thigh length:

#### Below the knee:



# European Class hosiery



If a customer has long term swelling (chronic oedema) and is complaining that their hosiery is digging in, ActiLymph European Class hosiery should be recommended.

## ActiLymph<sup>®</sup> European Class hosiery

This type of hosiery:

- Treats and manages swelling of the leg
- Helps increase venous and lymphatic return, aiding absorption of excess limb fluid
- Can be used to prevent recurrence of chronic oedema/lymphoedema following bandaging
- Is available in different colours and styles:
  - Sand and black colours
  - Below the knee and thigh lengths
  - Classes 1, 2 and 3.

European Class hosiery has a similar level of compression to British Standard hosiery. However, it has a stiffer profile that makes it harder for limbs to expand. In this way, it maintains the limb and reduces swelling.

Thigh length:



Below the knee:



## ActiLymph European Class below the knee and thigh length stockings

Customer benefits:

- Easy to put on and take off
- Elasticated toe and heel sack – provides support and compression
- Legs feel lighter and more comfortable as ActiLymph prevents swelling
- Below the knee available in different lengths
- Thigh length features 'hold up' top band for improved grip – prevents stocking from slipping without the need for suspenders
- Available in black and sand colours.

# Customer 1



Jane is in the first trimester of her pregnancy and is looking for advice as she has noticed some changes in her legs.

## Problem

Jane reports that her legs are feeling heavy and there are signs of spider and superficial veins. She is worried as her mother suffered from varicose veins when she was pregnant. Jane mentions that she is reluctant to wear compression hosiery as she remembers them as being thick and surgical looking.

## Causes

In many cases, varicose veins are hereditary, so Jane is correct in thinking that she may be at risk of developing them. Her pregnancy is also a risk factor for varicose veins.

A woman's blood volume increases during pregnancy, and hormonal changes also cause the vein walls to relax, both of which put pressure on the veins and can result in varicose veins. As the baby develops, this can put further pressure on the veins.

## Recommendation

Unisex Class 1 black patterned socks



### Customer information:

- Cosmetically appealing to fashion-conscious women
- Comfortable, soft and silky
- Stylish diamond pattern with compression benefits
- Below the knee style is preferable because it is not restrictive as the baby bump grows.



## Further important information

Recommend that Jane visits her GP as pregnant women are able to get compression hosiery free on prescription if deemed at risk of vein problems.

Jane should have her legs measured in the morning before they swell later in the day.

Check Jane's feet for hard skin, calluses or damaged nails, all of which might damage the hosiery.

## Customer 2

A gentleman in his 40s has taken the opportunity to ask the pharmacist about deep vein thrombosis (DVT). He has read about this condition and since he is a frequent flyer, he is worried that it could affect him.

### Problem

As well as asking about DVT, the customer mentions that he has noticed changes in his legs including dry, itchy patches of skin and the appearance of spider veins.



### Causes

Prolonged periods of inactivity whilst travelling can lead to the formation of a clot in the deep veins in the calf or thigh muscles. This causes swelling or tenderness of the muscle as well as redness and warming of the surrounding skin.

If left untreated, it could lead to a life-threatening pulmonary embolism. Wearing compression hosiery helps the venous system by reducing venous stasis which can lead to a clot forming.

Impaired return of blood from the lower legs can also result in changes such as dry and flaky skin, swollen ankles, and spider or thread veins.



### Recommendation

Unisex Class 1 black socks

#### Customer information:

- Wearing compression hosiery every day as well as when travelling will help to improve circulation in the legs
- Encourages flow of blood back up the legs
- Helps to prevent further deterioration of leg health
- Comfortable, soft and silky.



### Further important information

This customer should have his legs measured in the morning before they have a chance to swell later in the day.

## Customer 3

Whilst picking up a prescription, Mrs Jones mentions that her compression hosiery is uncomfortable and not fitting properly. She also struggles to put on the hosiery due to poor grip in her arthritic hands.

### Problem

The condition of Mrs Jones's legs has deteriorated, resulting in increased swelling around her ankles and a misshapen leg. This indicates chronic oedema.

The British Standard hosiery she has been wearing is no longer appropriate since she now has oedema.

### Causes

This is chronic oedema as the swelling has lasted for more than three months and cannot be relieved by elevation – resulting in the distortion of the shape of the limb.



It is a result of impaired return of blood from the lower limbs due to weakened valves and vein walls. There can also be an imbalance between fluid leaking out of the blood capillaries into the tissue space and the re-absorption of this fluid by the lymphatic system, leading to an abnormal collection of fluid in the tissue space.



### Recommendation

**ActiLymph European Class**  
below the knee stockings

#### Customer information:

- Prevents and reduces swelling of the limb
- The firmness of the fabric is designed to control oedema in the lower limb
- Encourages movement and re-absorption of excess fluid from the tissues
- Easy to put on and take off
- Comfortable to wear
- Elasticated heel offers further support and ease of putting on
- Elasticated toe sack reduces any restriction and helps prevent swelling of the toes.



### Further information

Recommend that Mrs Jones visits her GP, who can change her prescription to European Class hosiery.

Mrs Jones should also ask her GP to prescribe an ActiGlide, which will help her to put on the hosiery.





A lady in her 50s has a prescription for thigh length compression hosiery. It is the first time she has been prescribed these. She is anxious about wearing this type of stocking and not keen to use a suspender belt.

### Problem

This lady has swollen varicose veins, along with swelling in her legs and ankles that worsens during the day. She has a sore, bulging vein at the back of her knee.



### Causes

These symptoms are caused by the vein walls thinning and losing their elasticity, along with vein valves not working properly. This results in pooling and a backward flow of blood.

### Recommendation

**ActiLymph European Class thigh length stockings**

#### Customer information:

- Prevents and reduces swelling of the limb
- Aids circulation
- Prescription is for thigh length hosiery because of the varicose vein at the back of the knee
- Wide silicone top band helps to grip and prevent slippage, so a suspender belt is not needed
- Easy to put on and take off
- Comfortable to wear
- Elasticated heel offers support
- Toe sack reduces any restriction
- Available in sand and black colours.



### Further information

Advise this customer that all hosiery should be hand or machine washed at 40°C and dried flat, away from direct heat.

Remind her that she will need to be re-measured every six months for new hosiery.

# Activa Resources



This guide, along with the following Activa resources, can be used as a CPD opportunity:

- Activa Healthcare website ([www.activahealthcare.co.uk](http://www.activahealthcare.co.uk)) for useful resources that you can pass on to your customers to help maintain their leg health. These include:
  - Leg condition identifier
  - Online hosiery selector – helps choose the ideal product for your customer
  - Measuring and fitting video
  - Patient information leaflets
  - Made to measure hosiery
- Case studies and papers on chronic oedema and lymphoedema
- E-learning modules.



Look out for the new Activa Healthcare Hosiery Selector App!

This handy app can help you select Activa compression hosiery for your customers

**Sizes** – tap in your customer's measurements and the app will work out the size of hosiery you need for Activa British Standard, the ActiLymph range, or Activa Hosiery Kits and Liners.

**Conditions** – tap on the photos of common venous leg conditions and the app will recommend the appropriate class of Activa compression hosiery for that condition.

**Activa range** – does it come in open toe? Is there a black option? Find the answers in an instant!

Request your FREE Angela Rippon customer leaflets.  
Call Activa Customer Care 08450 606 707

Remember to record your CPD learning at [www.uptodate.org.uk](http://www.uptodate.org.uk)

## Compression hosiery is not suitable for people with:

- Congestive cardiac failure (as can lead to overload)
- Known sensitivity to the fabric of the stockings

Compression hosiery should be used with caution where diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis are present.



**CIG HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP**

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written permission of the publishers, Activa Healthcare in association with CIG Healthcare Partnership. © 2013 CIG Healthcare Partnership, Linen Hall, 162-168 Regent Street, London W1B 5TB. [www.cighealthcare.co.uk](http://www.cighealthcare.co.uk)