

# Compression hosiery guidance document

The choice for clinicians when choosing compression hosiery is vast and frequently bewildering. This booklet aims to help clinicians understand the different types of hosiery available to them and to be able to assess for and select accurately the correct hosiery for their patients.

A number of companies manufacture/supply hosiery, Activa hosiery are the garments in the wound formulary handbook.

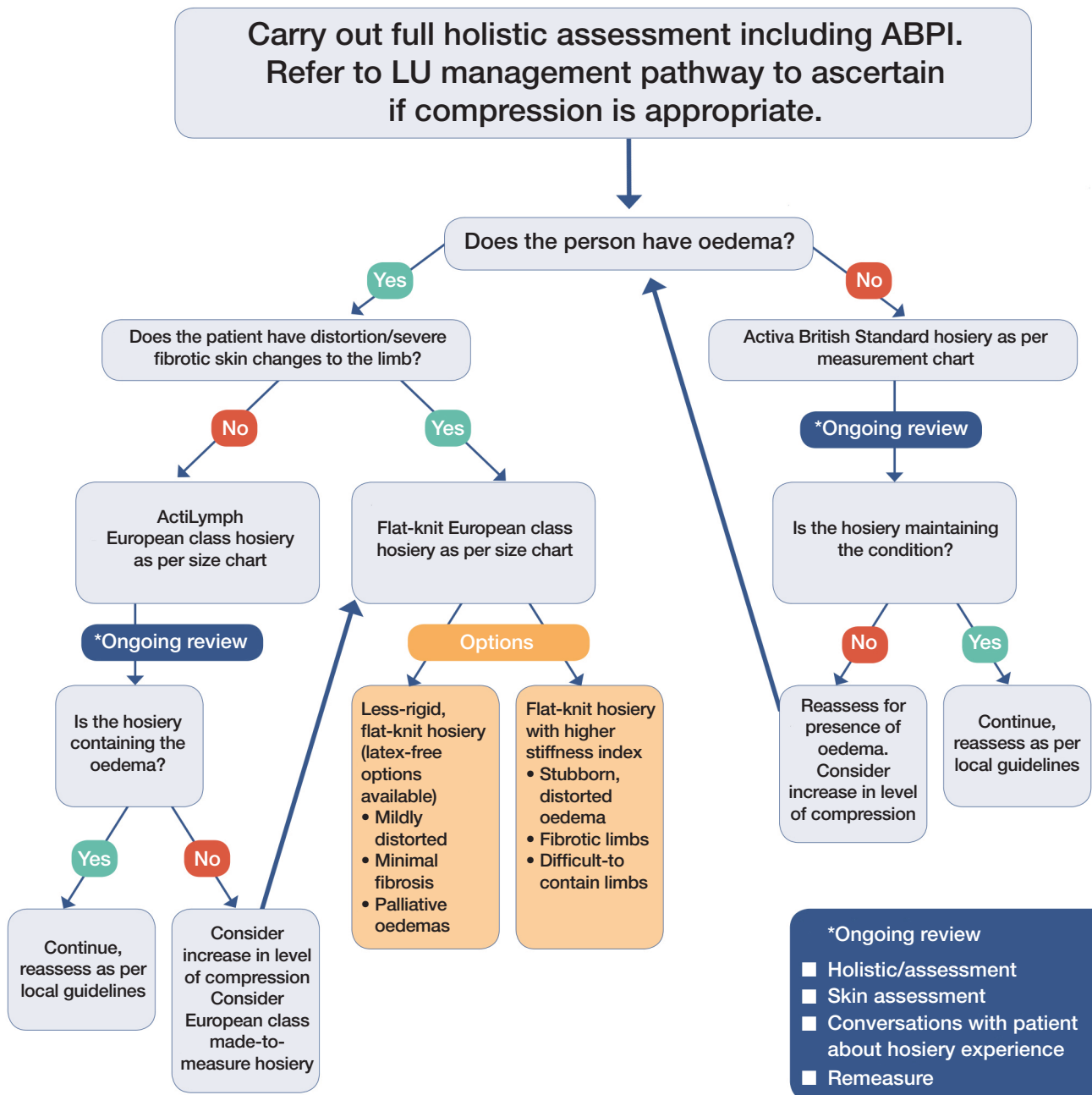
The aim of this booklet is to offer simple, clear choices when selecting hosiery that will meet the needs of the vast majority of patients.

If your patient's compression needs are not met by the products on this formulary please refer to Tissue Viability to assess for more specialist alternatives.

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# Decision-making pathway for compression hosiery selection



Adapted from Stephen-Haynes and Sykes, 2013

Patient name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# The CHROSS checker form

**NB:** Please retain this form in the patient's notes for future reference of previous assessment(s)

- It is important to check for the signs and symptoms of venous and lymphovenous disease, which are listed in the chart below.
- The chart should be used as a prompt to check for skin and limb changes as part of the holistic patient assessment.
- The compression products recommended should be used as part of an overall management plan, which includes medical management of underlying disease(s), skin and wound care, and patient education.
- Vascular status must be determined before applying compression. If in doubt, do not use and refer for specialist advice.
- If no ticks are recorded, the limb is healthy and no action is needed, other than a good skin care regimen.
- In the 'early/medium intervention' and 'intensive management' phases, before managing with hosiery, a period of treatment with compression bandaging (e.g. Actico®) may be required.
- For further information on the signs/symptoms listed below, including photographs and description, please refer to the accompanying key cards.

	1. Tick the box below if the sign/symptom is reported, or present on the limb of the patient		2. Is oedema also present? Tick 'YES' or 'NO' (in the colour band of the lowest tick in step 1)	3. Consider application of the compression below, depending on disease severity (mild, moderate or severe) as part of management
Prevention	Tired, aching, heavy legs	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Activa® British Standard hosiery <sup>†</sup>
	Spider veins	<input type="checkbox"/>		Mild: Class 1 (14–17mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Ankle flare	<input type="checkbox"/>		Moderate: Class 2 (18–24mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Mild/moderate hyperkeratosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	ActiLymph® European Class hosiery <sup>††</sup>
	Mild/moderate varicose veins	<input type="checkbox"/>		Mild: Class 1 (18–21mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Hyperpigmentation	<input type="checkbox"/>		Moderate: Class 2 (23–32mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Venous dermatitis	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Early/medium intervention	Varicose eczema	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Activa® British Standard hosiery <sup>†</sup>
	Atrophie blanche	<input type="checkbox"/>		Moderate: Class 2 (18–24mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Induration	<input type="checkbox"/>		Severe: Class 3 (25–35mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Moderate/severe varicose veins	<input type="checkbox"/>		Activa® Leg Ulcer Hosiery Kit <input type="checkbox"/>
	Moderate/severe hyperkeratosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	ActiLymph® European Class hosiery <sup>††</sup>
	Healed ulcer <sup>*/**</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Moderate: Class 2 (23–32mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Recurring ulcer/open ulcer <sup>*/**</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Severe: Class 3 (34–46mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Cellulitis <sup>***</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>		ActiLymph® Hosiery Kit <input type="checkbox"/>

Before hosiery can be effectively used in the intensive management phase, the use of compression bandaging may be required

Intensive management	Lipodermatosclerosis (acute or chronic)	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Activa® British Standard hosiery <sup>†</sup>
	Chronic oedema/lymphoedema	<input type="checkbox"/>		Severe: Class 3 (25–35mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Severe hyperkeratosis	<input type="checkbox"/>		ActiLymph® European Class hosiery <sup>††</sup>
	Skin folds	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	Moderate: Class 2 (23–32mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Papillomatosis	<input type="checkbox"/>		Severe: Class 3 (34–46mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Lymphangiomas	<input type="checkbox"/>		ActiLymph® Hosiery Kit <input type="checkbox"/>
	Lymphorrhoea (wet legs)	<input type="checkbox"/>		ActiLymph® MTM Ease or MTM Dura
			Moderate: Class 2 (23–32mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>	
			Severe: Class 3 (34–46mmHg) <input type="checkbox"/>	

<sup>†</sup> Activa® Leg Ulcer Hosiery Kit (40mmHg)

<sup>††</sup> ActiLymph® Hosiery Kit

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Acute cellulitis should be treated before using compression

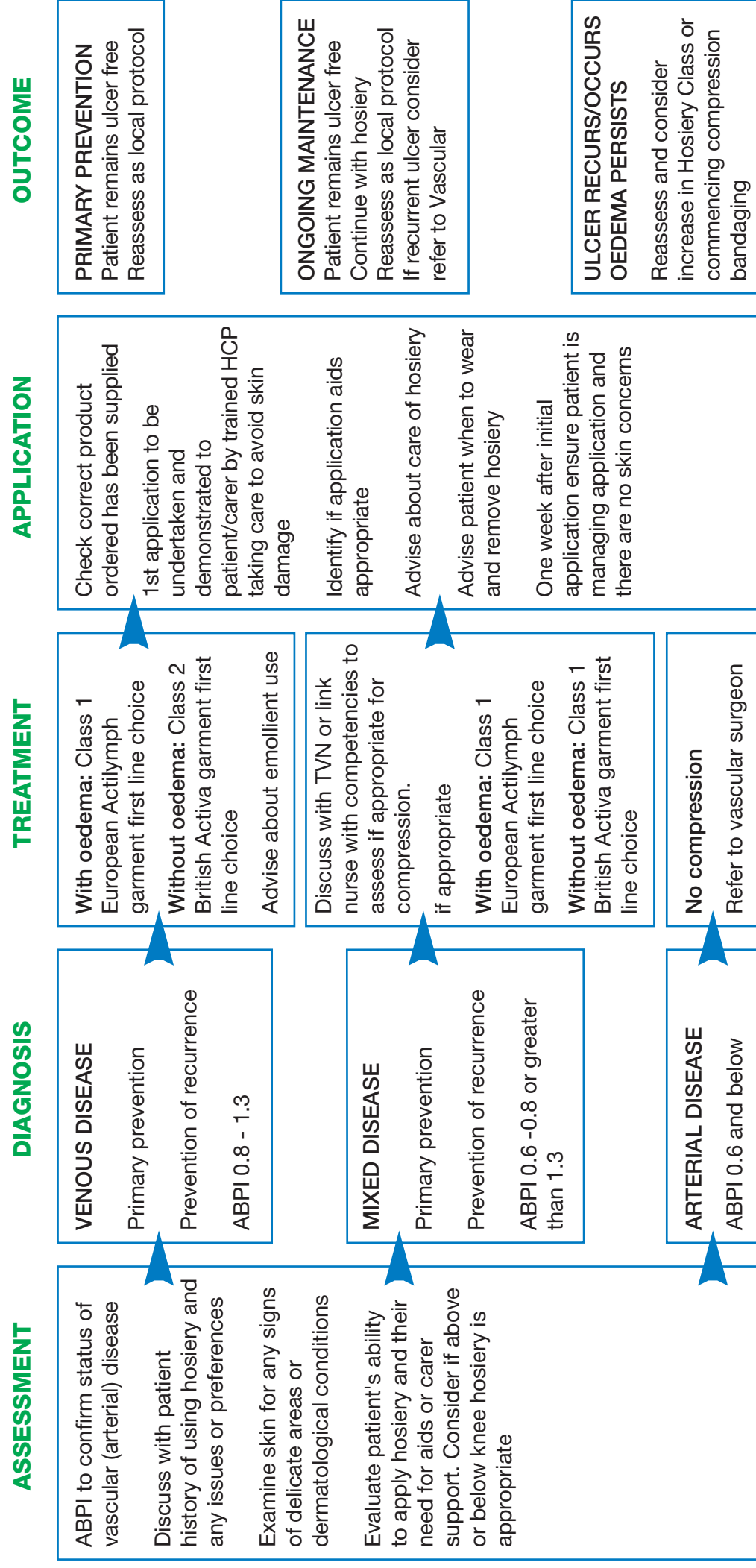
Once the correct Class of hosiery has been selected for disease severity, if limb measurements do not match stock sizes, use either Credalast® Velvet Made to Measure hosiery<sup>†</sup> or ActiLymph® Made to Measure flat knit hosiery<sup>††</sup>

# ‘Well’ leg pathway

## Compression hosiery is used as prevention and as ongoing management for several reasons:

- 1. Primary prevention** - Prevention of ulceration, chronic oedema or lymphedema depends on early intervention. Compression hosiery may be used when there are early signs of lymphoedema/chronic oedema (to prevent or reduce swelling), venous insufficiency (to prevent ulceration/varicose eczema etc) or prevent/reduce incidence of deep vein thrombosis in patients deemed 'at risk'.
- 2. Ongoing maintenance** - Compression is used post ulcer healing to control oedema, and reduce venous hypertension so reducing risk of ulcer recurrence. Please refer to CHROSS checker (page 3).

All patients presenting for 'well leg' assessment should receive a copy for the well leg leaflet.



## USES

Activa stockings are British standard hosiery and are for use in limbs with a graduated shape and without oedema. They are latex free.

- to prevent ulceration
- prevent recurrence of healed venous ulcers
- to prevent, or following DVT
- to prevent the progression of lymphovenous disease in the absence of oedema

## CHOICES

- Below knee or thigh length
- Class 1, class 2, class 3
- Closed toe or open toe
- Sand, honey or black
- Unisex sock and unisex patterned sock for patient preference
- For full and up-to-date details on options available, please consult the manufacturer's catalogue and measuring resources.

## SIZES

To select the correct size please use the following guide - **FOR ACTIVA HOSIERY ONLY**

## Activa® British Standard Hosiery

**Measuring Guide** a size indicator can be found by a coloured thread in the stocking

**Hip:** (tights only) Not available on FP10/GP10

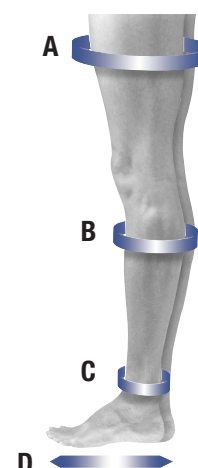
**A:** Widest part of the thigh (5cm below the groin)

**C:** Just above the malleolus (ankle bone)

**B:** Widest part of the calf

**D:** From back of the heel to the longest toe

SIZE	S	M	L	XL	XXL*
<b>Hip</b>	Up to 107cm	107-112cm	112-122cm	122-132cm	N/A
<b>A</b>	40.5-53.0cm	43.0-55.0cm	48.0-60.5cm	53.0-66.0cm	N/A
<b>B</b>	30.5-37.5cm	33.0-40.0cm	35.5-43.0cm	38.0-46.0cm	40.0-49.0cm
<b>C</b>	19.5-25.5cm	21.5-27.5cm	22.5-29.5cm	23.0-32.0cm	23.5-34.0cm
<b>D</b>	20.5-24.0cm	23.0-26.0cm	25.5-29.5cm	26.5-32.5cm	26.5-32.5cm



(Please note the measurements for ActiLymph are different to the Activa stockings)

To prevent delays in treatment, patients can be prescribed up to 17mmHg compression (e.g. Class 1 British standard hosiery) in the absence of a full vascular assessment if no risk factors for arterial insufficiency are identified.

If any ONE of the following list is recognised, then the patient must proceed to have a full holistic assessment including Doppler/ABPI in order to consider any application of compression above 10mmHg (liner support hosiery).

## FACTORS TO ASCERTAIN ARTERIAL RISK FACTORS

- Smokes
- Intermittent claudication
- Reduced/absent foot sensation (neuropathy)
- Pain on rest/elevating limbs
- Myocardial infarction, angina, cerebrovascular accident, ischaemic heart disease, transient ischaemic attack
- Rheumatoid arthritis and active associated vasculitis
- Diabetes
- Signs of limb/foot ischaemia/known peripheral arterial disease

Hosiery up to 17mmHg (Class 1, British Standard) may be applied to patients with none of these symptoms whilst awaiting a full Leg Ulcer assessment, which must include a Doppler. This should take place within two weeks of presentation (BPS, 2015 Wounds-UK).

# ActiLymph®

## USES

Actilymph stockings are European classification and for use in limbs with a graduated shape with oedema.

- To prevent ulceration
- To prevent recurrence of ulceration
- To manage chronic oedema in a limb that has previously been decongested with multi-layer bandaging

## CHOICES

- Below knee – petite or standard
- Thigh length – regular or wide top band
- Open toe or closed toe
- Class 1, class 2, class 3
- Sand or black
- For full and up-to-date details on options available, please consult the manufacturer’s catalogue and measuring resources.

## SIZES

To select the correct size please use the following guide - **FOR ACTILYMPH HOSIERY ONLY**

# ActiLymph®

## Measuring Guide

**G:** 5cm from groin

**C:** Widest part of the calf

**B:** Just above the malleolus (ankle bone)

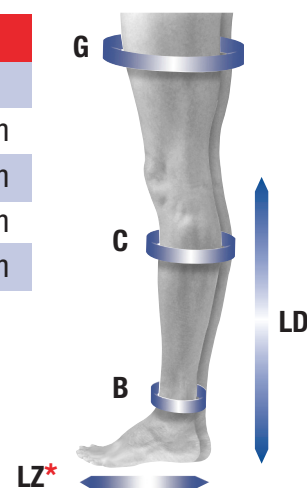
**LD:** From the popliteal space to the floor

**LZ:** From back of the heel to the longest toe

SIZE	S	M	L	XL	XXL
<b>G</b> Wide Topband	57-66cm	61-72cm	66-80cm	74-90cm	N/A
<b>G<sup>X</sup></b> Regular Topband	48-56cm	50-60cm	53-66cm	57-73cm	61-80cm
<b>C</b>	31-39cm	33-41cm	35-44cm	39-48cm	44-52cm
<b>B</b>	19-21cm	22-23.5cm	23-27cm	27-32cm	32-37cm
<b>LZ*</b>	22-28cm	22-28cm	22-28cm	22-28cm	22-28cm

Style	Leg length (LD)	Foot length (LZ)
<b>Below Knee</b>	Petite <38cm	22-25cm
	Standard >38cm	22-28cm

(Please note the measurements for ActiLymph are different to the Activa stockings)



# Hosiery Kits contain two liners and one stocking

## USES

- To enable self-care, helping patient's to apply compression independently
- In the last stages of ulcer healing if the dressing allows, to transition into maintenance
- To layer hosiery and achieve higher levels of compression

## CHOICES

- Below knee only
- Sand upper stocking with white liner
- Black upper stocking with sand liner
- Use Activa Hosiery kits, for limbs without oedema – liners and class 3 Activa stocking. One liner and the class 3 activa stocking deliver 40mmHg. Use the Activa leg Ulcer Hosiery measuring guide below
- Use Actilymph hosiery kits for limbs with oedema – liners and class 2 Actilymph stocking. One liner and the class 2 Actilymph stocking will deliver 38mHg. Use the Actilymph measuring guide below

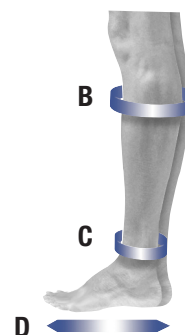
## SIZES

### Activa® Leg Ulcer Hosiery Kit

**Measuring Guide** a size indicator can be found by a coloured thread in the stocking

**C:** Just above the malleolus (ankle bone)      **D:** From back of the heel to the longest toe  
**B:** Widest part of the calf

SIZE	S	M	L	XL	XXL*
<b>B</b>	30.5-37.5cm	33.0-40.0cm	35.5-43.0cm	38.0-46.0cm	40.0-49.0cm
<b>C</b>	19.5-25.5cm	21.5-27.5cm	22.5-29.5cm	23.0-32.0cm	23.5-34.0cm
<b>D</b>	20.5-24.0cm	23.0-26.0cm	25.5-29.5cm	26.5-32.5cm	26.5-32.5cm

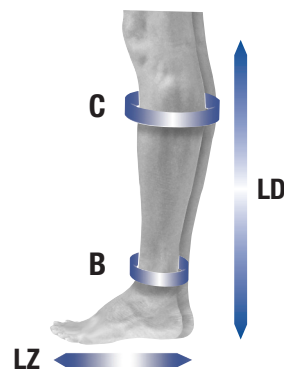


### ActiLymph® Hosiery Kit

#### Measuring Guide

**C:** Widest part of the calf      **LD:** From the popliteal space to the floor  
**B:** Just above the malleolus (ankle bone)      **LZ:** From back of the heel to the longest toe

SIZE	M	L	XL	XXL
<b>C</b>	33-41cm	35-44cm	39-48cm	44-52cm
<b>B</b>	21-23.5cm	23-27cm	27-32cm	32-37cm
<b>LZ</b>	22-28cm	22-28cm	22-28cm	22-28cm



Style	Leg Length (LD)	Foot Length (LZ)
Below Knee	Standard >38cm	22-28cm



# Liner hosiery - Liner stockings deliver 10mmHg

## USES

They may be useful if lower limb assessment indicates some mixed venous and arterial disease **e.g.** ABPI 0.6 – 0.8, or in palliative situations or when gentle introduction to compression is indicated due to limb pain.

- Wearing one 10mmHg liner on top of another, **e.g.** 2 x 10mmHg liners = 20mmHg\* or
- Can be worn under a higher compression stocking. The silky liner material enables the top stocking to slip easily over the leg. This can be easier to put on than a single high compression garment, **e.g.** 1 x 10mmHg liner plus Activa British Standard 14-17mmHg = 25mmHg

## These stockings should NOT be used;

- As a stop gap if lower limb assessment is delayed
- Without a lower limb assessment having taken place

## CHOICES

- Black, sand or white closed toe
- Sand open toe

## SIZES

Use the Activa measuring guide on page 3 of this document

## CAUTION

When ordering liner hosiery be careful to select the liner packs and not the leg ulcer hosiery kit which contains a liner. There can be confusion when prescriptions are produced and patients have received full compression garments in error in the past.

# Flat Knit European Class

## Made-to-measure hosiery

### USES

This is bespoke hosiery to be used when oedema is present and;

- For limbs that do not fit the 'off-the-shelf' measurement guides
- For abnormal shaped limbs with skin folds where no further reduction can be achieved with inelastic compression bandaging.

### CHOICES and SIZES

Garments come in a variety of styles and sizes according to the individual manufacturers. Please refer to manufacturers made-to-measure measuring guides.

For further advice contact your tissue viability nurse.

### Made-to-measure garments come in two options.

- The less rigid flat knit hosiery for mildly distorted limbs with minimal fibrosis. These garments may be used for palliative patients.
- Flat knit Made-to-measure garments with a higher stiffness index for distorted oedema, fibrotic changes and difficult to contain oedema.

# How to generate a prescription

Please follow these simple steps to avoid any problems associated with generating a hosiery prescription:

Insert the following in the following order:

**Brand**

**Class**

**Style** (below knee or thigh length)

**Closed or open toe**

**Colour**

**Size.**

Pharmacy Stamp      Age      Title, Forename, Surname & Address  
D.o.B  
Please don't stamp over age box  
Number of days' treatment  
N.B. Ensure dose is stated  
Endorsements      EFNP/NURSE SUPPLEMENTARY PRESCRIBER      PN  
2 x Activa  
Class 2  
Below Knee  
Closed toe  
Black  
Large  
Signature of Prescriber      Date  
For dispenser  
No. of  
Prescns.  
on form  
NHS

## Hosiery wear time

If cared for correctly, Activa and Actilymph hosiery will maintain compression for up to 100 washes. This equates to up to 6-months wear time.

