



For Immediate Release

Graduated compression therapy: The Vein Healthcare Center explains what it is and how to use it to relieve the symptoms of varicose veins

December 27, 2012 (South Portland, ME) – [Venous disease](#)— a condition that can include [varicose veins](#), spider veins, or deep vein thrombosis— is one of the most common health problems in the U.S. According to Dr. Cindy Asbjornsen of the Vein Healthcare Center in Maine, there are several options for conservative treatment of venous symptoms, including [graduated compression therapy](#).

“Graduated compression stockings play a significant role in vein care and good vein health,” said Dr. Asbjornsen. “They can prevent vein problems from occurring, relieve venous disease symptoms, and decrease the likelihood of a blood clot.”

Here are some important things to know for those considering compression therapy:

- Work with a qualified physician, preferably a [Board certified phlebologist](#). Compression stockings require a prescription and can be purchased at many pharmacies, most major medical supply stores, and specialty stores.
- Patients that undergo a [vein procedure](#), including sclerotherapy, endovenous laser ablation and others, must wear gradient compression stockings immediately following the procedure and during the recovery period.
- “TED hose” are NOT the same as graduated compression stockings. T.E.D.— an acronym for Thrombo Embolic Deterrent— hose are “anti-embolic” stockings and are often worn after surgery to help prevent DVT while patients are bed bound. They work well for this purpose, but in the ambulatory patient with symptoms of venous disease, they, generally do not stop the progression of venous disease.
- Gradient compression is expressed in millimeters of mercury, or “mmHg.” It is the measurement of how much compression or “squeeze” that is placed on the leg: the higher the number, the greater the compression.
- A good fit is absolutely essential. Take the time to be properly fitted.
- These days, compression stockings are fashionable, comfortable, and come in a wide variety of styles and colors.
- Compression therapy provides an alternative for patients who opt for a more conservative treatment. Stockings can be worn for years as a long-term option for managing symptoms of venous disease.

To better understand venous disease and how compression works, here's a review of how veins work. Veins carry blood from all the extremities back to the heart. The blood in the legs travels up against gravity, so when the valves in the veins become damaged, blood flows back into the legs to create a "pooling" effect.

Medical compression stockings provide a gradient of pressure against the leg. The pressure is highest at the foot and ankle and gradually decreases as the garment rises up the leg. This pressure gradient makes it easier for the body to pump blood up towards the heart (the normal direction) and more difficult for gravity to pull blood downward.

To learn more about the prevention and treatment of venous disease, visit <http://www.veinhealthcarecenter.com>.

Dr. Cindy Asbjornsen is the founder of the Vein Healthcare Center, as well as the Maine Phlebology Association. Certified by the American Board of Phlebology, she cares for all levels of venous disease, including spider veins, varicose veins and venous ulcers. Dr. Asbjornsen is the only vein specialist in Maine to be named a Fellow by the American College of Phlebology. She is also the editorial director of Vein Health News, Maine's vein magazine for primary care physicians.

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