

# Pressure therapy

This information sheet tells you how to care for your pressure garment and advises you of potential issues to look out for. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to call your hand therapist using the number on the back page.

## What is pressure therapy?

Pressure therapy involves applying pressure to a scar, usually with a pressure garment. The garment is made to measure and is made of an elastic material called Lycra®. The pressure garment flattens and softens your scar by applying pressure to it. The garment must be worn at all times, day and night. It can be taken off to bathe and to massage your scar, but apart from that it should be worn constantly.

## Caring for your pressure garment

- Wash the garment regularly in lukewarm water, using a mild detergent (liquid, not powder). You can either wash by hand or in a machine at 45°C.
- Rinse well and squeeze or roll up in a dry towel.
- Never place the pressure garment over direct heat, such as a radiator.

**You should take off the garment and contact your hand therapist as soon as possible if you experience:**

- Swelling, 'pins and needles' sensation, changes in the colour of your hands, feet or fingertips.
- Soreness or broken skin.
- Damage to the garment.
- Discomfort when wearing the garment.
- Restricted movement caused by tightening of the scar across the joint.
- A sense that the pressure has gone from the garment.

**Do not wait until your next appointment to report any of the above complaints.**

**Patient's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of garment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I hereby give consent to the wearing of the above garment and have received an explanation of the purpose of its use.**

**Patient/Parent/Guardian's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Hand therapist:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the hand therapy department at St Thomas' Hospital on **020 7188 4172** (Monday to Friday 8am–5pm) or the hand therapy department at Guy's Hospital **020 7188 4185** (Monday to Friday 8.30am–4.30pm).

### Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

### Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS)      **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints)      **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

### Language and Accessible Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

**t:** 020 7188 8815      **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

### NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 111

### NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

**w:** www.nhs.uk

### Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, and to become a member:

**t:** 0800 731 0319      **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk

**w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

**Leaflet number: 1540/VER3**

Date published: November 2016

Review date: November 2019

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