

Which socks to use with your prosthesis

This leaflet explains how you use prosthetic socks to make sure your prosthesis fits properly and is comfortable. If you have any further questions, please speak to the prosthetist or therapist caring for you.

Why do I need to wear a sock at all?

It's important to wear socks and liners to help with the comfort and fit of your prosthesis.

When used properly they

- provide a cushioning effect with the socket
- help stop friction between the skin and the socket
- help to make sure there is even pressure within the socket.

Why do I need to change the number of socks I wear?

For a few months after your amputation your stump, also called a residuum will change shape and size during the day.

This means that to make sure you have a good fit between your residuum and your prosthesis, you may need to vary the number of socks you wear during the day.

How will I know when to vary my socks?

You will learn to do this during your rehabilitation. As you progress each day you will find out what fits best in the morning and how your residuum changes during the day, or from day to day.

Your prosthetist and therapist will help you with this.

What happens if my residuum gets smaller?

You may experience the following:

Below knee amputees only

- your residuum goes too far into the inner liner
- pressure on your knee cap rather than under your knee
- pressure on the bottom or the front end of your bone when you walk
- the inner liner goes on too easily

Above knee amputees only

- pressure in your groin or between your legs

All amputees

- the prosthesis feels loose and your residuum may move around inside the socket when you walk.

What do I do if my residuum gets smaller?

As a guide, wearing three thin socks is the same as wearing one thick sock.

Below knee amputees

If you are wearing:

- one thin sock, you need to add another thin sock
- two thin socks, you need to replace these with one thick sock
- one thick sock and one thin sock, you need to add another thin sock
- one thick sock and two thin socks, you need to replace these with two thick socks.

This sequence continues until you reach the stage of wearing three thick socks on a regular basis. When this happens you need to contact the centre for a review appointment.

Above knee amputees

Follow the information for Below knee amputees above, but you may only use thick socks and go straight to adding a second thick sock, missing out the thin sock stages.

What happens if my residuum gets bigger?

You may experience the following:

- your residuum does not fit into the inner liner or socket
- your liner or socket feels tight
- your prosthesis feels too long.

What do I do if I think my prosthesis is too tight?

Reduce the amount of socks you are wearing – take off either a thin or a thick sock, or change a thick sock for one or two thin ones.

If you are only wearing one thin sock, you will need to contact the centre for some advice.

How do I care for my socks?

- You will be given a set of socks to take home to allow you to wear a clean set of socks every day.
- In hot weather you may need to change them during the day.
- Wash your socks on a 50° wash. You can tumble dry the white cotton socks.
- Do not tumble dry your compression (brown) sock.
- The thin nylon sock is used to help slide your residuum into your liner/socket and to help stop friction on your residuum.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about how to use your socks or how to get more socks, please contact your prosthetist on 020 8487 6042 or your therapist on 020 8487 6042 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm). Out of hours, please leave a message on either of the above numbers and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

