

Oedema Management Techniques – Coban wrap

This leaflet offers more information about Coban wrap. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the hand therapist involved in your care.

What is oedema and why have I got it?

Oedema is a build-up of excessive fluid in the body which causes the affected tissue to become swollen. Oedema in the hand can be caused by a variety of conditions or can occur after injury or surgery to the fingers or hand. After an injury, or surgery, your body's natural response is to send fluid to the affected area to start the healing process. With some medical conditions more generalised oedema can occur.

What is Coban wrap?

Coban wrap is an elasticated bandage that sticks to itself; however it will not stick to your skin. It can be put on around a finger or the hand in such a way, that it can help to gently push the swelling out of the affected area.

Coban is available in two different sizes. Your therapist will advise which size is most suitable for you to use. Please be aware that the hand therapy team will only provide you with a limited amount of Coban. Information is provided in this leaflet should you need to purchase additional Coban.

What do I do?

1 inch Coban wrap

1. Stretch the Coban to about half of its maximum stretch and wrap it around the tip of your finger. Make sure that you leave the fingertip free so that you can check the colour of your skin to ensure that the wrap is not on too tightly.
2. Maintaining a gentle stretch, continue to wrap the Coban down your finger, covering each layer with a new half layer, each time – ALWAYS wrap from the tip of your finger to the base, never the other way around.
3. Once you have wrapped the Coban along the entire length of the finger, gently squeeze the Coban to ensure that it is firmly stuck together.
4. Bend and straighten your finger a few times and you will feel that the Coban tightens up a little bit.
5. Check the colour of your fingertip to ensure that it is not too dark; it should return to normal after a few minutes. If the skin remains dark, goes white or starts throbbing, you have applied the Coban too tightly. Remove the Coban and reapply it with a little less stretch.

What do I do?

3 inch Coban wrap

1. Cut off a piece of Coban about 5-6 cm wide (~2 – 3 inches).
2. Put a small crescent shaped cut in the bottom of the Coban – your therapist will show you how to do this.
3. With the crescent cut out at the base of the finger, gently wrap the Coban up and around the side of the finger and gently squeeze the Coban to ensure it is firmly stuck together (see figure one).
4. Using a pair of small scissors, cut down any excess Coban (see figure two).



Figure One

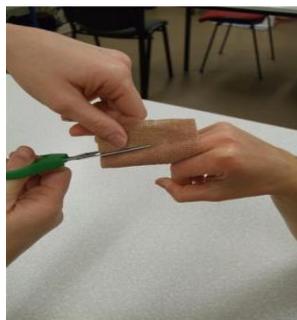


Figure Two

5. Bend and straighten your finger a few times and you will feel that the Coban tightens up a little bit.
6. Check the colour of your fingertip to ensure that it is not too dark; it should return to normal after a few minutes. If the skin remains dark, goes white or starts throbbing, you have applied the Coban too tightly. Remove the Coban and reapply it with a little less stretch.

Other helpful tips

1. If wearing the Coban overnight, do not apply it as tightly and carefully check the tip of your finger before you go to sleep.
2. If your finger gets wet while wearing Coban, remove it as soon as possible, dry the finger and reapply a new piece of Coban. Do not leave it on your finger whilst wet.
3. You can re-use each piece of Coban up to three times or until it stops sticking to itself.
4. If you run out of Coban you can purchase more in the following ways:

Mediworld: 444-446 Streatham High Road, London SW16 3PX Tel: 0208 764 1806

Amazon: www.amazon.co.uk

Medisave: Tel: 0800 804 6447 www.medisave.co.uk

Useful sources of information

NHS Choices

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Oedema/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about the oedema in your hand, please contact Hand Therapy on 020 8725 1038 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm).

Your therapist is: _____

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 9.30am and 4.30pm, 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

