

Pressure Garment Prescription for Scar Management

This leaflet explains more about the benefits of wearing a pressure garment, including how to care for it. If you have any further questions, please speak to your hand therapist.

Why do I need a pressure garment?

A scar is a natural part of the healing process following an injury to the skin. Most scars are flat and pale and leave only a small trace of an injury on the skin.

If a wound has taken a long time to heal or you have had a skin graft or a muscle flap then you are more at risk of developing something called hypertrophic scarring.

In a hypertrophic scar, the skin produces too many collagen fibres as part of the healing process. These collagen fibres become red and lumpy and also make the skin tight and raised. New blood vessels form and make the scars red.

Pressure garments may help to control the collagen fibres and keep the scar flat and supple. You should then get a softer, paler, flatter scar.

Pressure garments need to be used for between six months and two years, depending on the type of surgery you've had and how quickly your scar changes.

How do I get a pressure garment?

If your therapist thinks it will help, a pressure garment will be made to measure for you to ensure an exact fit.

Your hand therapist will take the measurements and prescribe the right design for your needs. The garment will then be made by an external company called Jobskin.

To get the best result, you will need to wear the pressure garment as much as possible during any 24 hour period. All patients will get two pressure garments – one to wear and one to wash.

Pressure garments usually last four to six months before needing to be replaced. If a clinical assessment says you need another garment **within six months** of your first two, the hospital will give you **one** additional garment.

Any more pressure garments needed six months after you were given the first two **will need to be paid for directly by you as the patient**. Payment details can be found later in this leaflet. Your therapist can help with ordering.

If you need more pressure garments after further surgery relating to your original injury, these will be funded again by the hospital for up to six months after that surgery.

How do I pay for my pressure garment?

If you need to pay for your garment directly, your therapist can take new measurements for you if needed and can help you place your order with Jobskin.

To make the payment you will need to contact the Jobskin office directly on **0870 240 3963**. You should be able to pay by card or cheque.

If you are not able to contact Jobskin directly, you can ask your hand therapist to give them your contact details and they will contact you to arrange payment.

How do I wear and care for my pressure garment?

To stop your pressure garment wearing out, always follow the care instructions provided with it.

Wash the pressure garment every day:

- hand wash OR machine wash up to 40⁰ with a mild detergent
- roll in a towel to dry out excess moisture
- leave in an airing cupboard or over a clothes horse to dry
- DO NOT tumble dry, dry your garment over a radiator or dry clean your garment.

Wear your pressure garment full time, as directed by your therapist. Only remove it for skin hygiene and moisturising.

Pressure garments do not protect you from the sun so you will need to wear sun block over your scar area for extra protection.

Continue to moisturise and massage your scar area as told to by your therapist.

How will I know if I need a new pressure garment?

Your therapist will monitor the fit of your pressure garment on a regular basis and take new measurements as needed.

Your therapist will also monitor how your scar, skin graft or muscle flap is healing and discuss with you any continuing need for you to wear a pressure garment.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your pressure garment, please discuss these with your hand therapist.

Therapist: _____

Treatment enquires: 020 8725 1038 (answer phone only)

Appointment enquires: 020 8725 0007

Jobskin website: www.jobskin.co.uk

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 wings (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

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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