

Pressure Garment Prescription for Scar Management

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

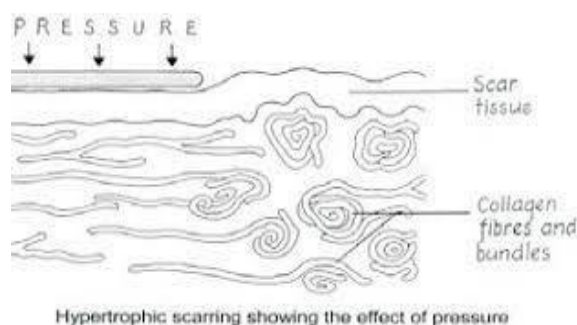
Why do I need a pressure garment?

A scar is a natural part of the healing process following an injury to the skin. Most scars are flat and pale and leave minimal trace of an injury on the skin. However, if a wound has taken a long time to heal or if you have had skin grafts or a muscle flap, then you are more at risk of developing *hypertrophic* scarring.

Hypertrophic scarring is caused by an overproduction of collagen fibres in the skin as part of the healing process. The collagen fibres become red and lumpy and rather than laying themselves down in straight lines, they develop into lumps and bumps, which can cause the skin to become tight and raised. The redness in the scars is the result of new blood vessels being formed.

Pressure garments may help control the formation of collagen fibres and keep the scar flat and supple.

This can lead to a softer, paler and flatter scar. Pressure garments need to be used anywhere between six months to two years, depending on the type of surgery you have had and how quickly the scar tissue matures.



How do I obtain a pressure garment?

If your therapist feels that a pressure garment may help, they will take measurements for the garment and prescribe the right design for your needs. The garment will then be made by an external company called Medigarments.

To get the best result, the pressure garment will need to be worn as much as possible during a 24 hour period. All patients will get two pressure garments: one to wear and one to wash. Pressure garments will usually last somewhere between four and six months before a replacement is needed.

How do I care for my pressure garment?

To prolong the wear of your garment, it is advised that you follow the care instructions provided with the pressure garment. Additional information on its care is outlined below:

- The pressure garment needs to be worn full time as directed by your therapist. It should only be removed for skin hygiene and moisturising.
- The pressure garment should be washed every day:
 - Hand wash OR machine wash up to 40°C 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 your garment, dry your garment over a radiator or dry clean it.
- Pressure garments do not protect you from the sun therefore you will still need to wear sunblock over your scar area for extra protection.
- You will need to continue with moisturising and massage of your scar area as directed by your therapist.

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

Your therapist will monitor the fit of your pressure garments on a regular basis and will take new measurements as needed. However, you can contact your therapist sooner if you feel you need an earlier review.

Your therapist will monitor your scar, skin graft or muscle flap and will discuss any need for you to continue to wear a pressure garment.

Contact us

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

Therapist: _____

Treatment Enquires: 020 8725 1038

(answering machine only)

Appointment Enquires: 020 8725 0007

Email: handtherapy@stgeorges.nhs.uk

Or scan
here



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

Was this information helpful? Yes / No

Please let us know, contact patient.information@stgeorges.nhs.uk and include the leaflet title.

Thank you.

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings.

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

NHS UK

The NHS 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 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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