



Compression Socks: Comfort & Support During Recovery

Medical disclaimer (please read): This guide is for general educational purposes only and is not medical advice. Your surgeon, nurse, or clinician can tell you whether compression socks are appropriate for you, what compression level to use, and how long to wear them based on your procedure and medical history.

Compression socks are fitted garments that apply gentle, graduated pressure to the ankles and lower legs. During recovery—especially when activity is reduced—they may help support circulation and manage swelling as part of your clinician’s post-op plan.

When compression socks are commonly used

People often consider compression socks when their care team recommends supporting circulation or managing swelling—including recovery after:

- Orthopedic surgeries (hip, knee, ankle, or foot procedures)
- Abdominal surgery (hernia repair, C-section, tummy tuck)
- Bariatric or weight-loss surgery
- Cosmetic procedures (liposuction, BBL, mommy makeover)
- Varicose vein or other vascular procedures
- Spine or back surgery
- Any recovery plan with prolonged bed rest or limited mobility

Potential benefits (for many users)

Compression socks may help you:

- Support venous circulation in the legs when mobility is reduced
- Reduce lower-leg swelling and fluid buildup for some people
- Decrease the feeling of heaviness or fatigue in the legs
- Provide gentle support during standing, short walks, or travel (when appropriate)

- Follow clinician-recommended DVT prevention steps as part of a broader recovery plan

How compression socks can support recovery comfort

Depending on the compression level and fit, they can:

- Encourage blood flow back toward the heart and reduce pooling in the lower legs
- Help manage day-to-day swelling patterns that can change throughout recovery
- Be worn during daytime activity and removed at night unless your clinician advises otherwise
- Come in different compression levels—your clinician can recommend what’s right for you
- Be especially useful during periods of sitting (car rides, flights) when you’re cleared to travel

Safety note (important)

Safety disclaimer: Use only as directed by the manufacturer and follow your clinician’s instructions on compression level and wear time. Compression socks must fit correctly—too tight, bunched, or rolled socks can create pressure points. They may not be appropriate for everyone (for example, certain circulation problems or severe swelling), so check with a clinician if you’re unsure. Stop wearing them and contact a clinician if you develop significant pain, numbness/tingling, skin discoloration, blisters/skin breakdown, or swelling that suddenly worsens.

Seek urgent medical care if you have symptoms that could signal a blood clot or emergency—such as sudden or severe leg swelling, redness, warmth, new chest pain, shortness of breath, or coughing up blood.

Quick setup + safety checklist

- Confirm your plan: Ask your clinician what compression level and schedule to use (and whether to wear them overnight).
- Choose the right size: Measure ankles/calf (and follow the brand’s chart) to avoid socks that are too tight or too loose.
- Put them on early: Many people find they’re easiest to put on in the morning before swelling increases.
- Smooth, don’t bunch: Make sure fabric lies flat—no wrinkles, folds, or rolled tops that can constrict.
- Check skin daily: Look for redness, pressure marks, blisters, or irritation—especially if sensation is reduced.

- Keep them clean: Wash/dry as directed to maintain elasticity and hygiene.
- Replace when worn out: If they lose compression, slip down, or feel uneven, it may be time to replace them.

 **Helpful Tip:** If compression socks are hard to put on, try using clean rubber gloves for extra grip, or a simple sock-donning aid. Make sure the heel is seated correctly and the sock is fully smoothed out—small wrinkles can become uncomfortable after a few hours.

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