

## Introduction to Activa British Standard Hosiery

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Historically compression hosiery has been difficult to put on, uncomfortable to wear and unattractive in appearance. Activa, mindful of the needs of prescribers and hosiery wearers alike, was the first company to introduce new designs, yarns and technology. The result is the Queen's Award winning range of compression hosiery that is virtually indistinguishable from ordinary hosiery.

Health professionals have also attributed the wearing of Activa hosiery to increased patient compliance. "This study showed high adherence to treatment with compression hosiery. This could be attributed to the use of Activa stockings which, in the clinic nurses' experience, patients find easier to apply and find higher rates of comfort and aesthetic acceptance"- Journal of Community Nursing, 2001, Volume 6, Number 3. [Click here for the Sylvie Hampton article on the role of hosiery to prevent venous ulceration and DVTs](#) PDF no 12.

The hosiery is available in Classes BS 1, 2 and 3, in a variety of lengths, colours and styles including unisex ribbed socks and tights. If you would like a practical demonstration on how to fit and apply Activa hosiery, please call our Customer Care line 08450 606 707.

### Measuring and Fitting Information

Compression hosiery has been clinically proven to aid venous return and to help prevent leg ulcer recurrence. Patients should be assessed and measured for hosiery by a trained healthcare professional to ensure the correct size and class of hosiery is prescribed or recommended. [Click here for measuring chart](#). PDF no 10

Two pairs of stockings are normally prescribed, one to wear, one to wash. All patients should be reassessed every six months for new hosiery.

The Activa on-line [Hosiery Selector](http://www.activahealthcare.co.uk/resources) [www.activahealthcare.co.uk/resources](http://www.activahealthcare.co.uk/resources) can help health care professionals make these choices or use the measuring chart below and advice on the indications for each class.

Activa hosiery contains Tactel Nylon and Lycra Soft to produce a soft luxurious texture giving the ultimate in stretch, comfort and fit and clinical effectiveness.

### Activa BS 14-17mmHg Class 1 Available on FP10

Light Compression - Should be used for superficial or early varicose veins and swollen ankles.

## Activa BS 18-24mmHg Class 2 Available on FP10

Medium Compression - Should be used in medium severity varicose veins. Activa Class 2 can be used as part of the treatment for and to prevent the occurrence and recurrence of venous leg ulcers.

Class 2 hosiery should be considered post operatively and on long distance travel to help prevent deep vein thrombosis in high risk patients.

## Activa BS 25-35mmHg Class 3 Available on FP10

Strong Compression - Class 3 should be used for severe varicose veins. Activa Class 3 hosiery can be used for chronic venous insufficiency and in the treatment and prevention of venous leg ulcers.

### Contra Indications

- People with diabetes unless under medical supervision
- Significant arterial disease (ischaemia) according to vascular assessment
- Congestive cardiac failure as compression can lead to cardiac overload
- Known sensitivity to the fabric of the stocking

### How often should the hosiery be replaced?

Every 3 months. After 3 months of regular wear the garment loses elasticity and is unable to provide adequate compression. We recommend prescribing 2 pairs at once, one to wear, one to wash and replacing both after six months.

### Closed or open toe?

The choice of style is decided through discussion with the wearer. It is influenced by foot length i.e. A long foot may fit into a size large but the ankle and calf are size small, so an open toed small would be appropriate.

If wearing the hosiery at night or for several days an open toe allows the foot to be washed. If the wearer sees a chiropodist an open toed stocking will probably not need to be taken off. Painful corns on toes may make an open toe more comfortable.

### Knee or thigh length?

For most conditions a below knee is as effective as the longer thigh length. Many patients find a below knee easier to put on and wear. However it is important to discuss the style with the wearer.

Some female patients may feel more at home with thigh length stockings and suspenders. (The thigh length stockings need suspenders, NHS versions are available). Swollen or arthritic knees tend to be more comfortable in thigh length hosiery. Thigh length is suitable for patients with painful or protruding varicose veins at the back of the knee.

Male patients can be offered the unisex sock in black or brown, indistinguishable from normal hosiery.

### **Class I, II or III?**

The class the patient requires is dependent on a full and holistic assessment of the wearer. Local guidelines may influence the choice.

### **My patient has reacted to the hosiery, what should I do?**

Activa hosiery contains Lycrasoft. It is very rare that someone will react to the fabric, with reactions more commonly occurring from the hosiery not being thoroughly rinsed after washing and containing harsh residues from detergent. An inner liner of Actifast under the hosiery may help.

### **All brands cost the same on FP10 so why choose Activa?**

Our hosiery is soft and easy to fit; it contains features designed from nurse and patient feedback e.g. large toe area so as not to compress the toes.

### **The size is right so why is the hosiery so hard to get on?**

The ease of fitting the garment is affected by several factors. These may include the expertise and dexterity of the fitter. Fitting hosiery first thing in the morning is generally easier than later in the day. Using a foot powder may help, not regular talcum powder, which may form balls if the foot is damp.

Actiglide is a device to help get both closed and open toe hosiery on.

### **Can the hosiery be worn at night?**

Yes, the hosiery may be worn 24 hours a day. Providing there are no contra indications and inclusion criteria are met the hosiery can be worn for up to a week at a time.

### **Does Activa Hosiery contain rubber?**

No, the hosiery is made of nylon and lycra

### **Where do I get NHS suspenders for holding up thigh length stockings?**

Two styles of NHS suspender belt can be obtained from Credenhill T: 01159 320 144 They are the Credalast adjustable suspender belt or the Y shape suspender belt for a man (this is attached to the patient's trousers by one strong button). They are both khaki in colour. Both styles are available on prescription.