

## Compression Garment Information for Burn Patients

Compression garments are worn after a burn to decrease severity of scarring, to help the scar mature, and to improve the look of your injured skin. To achieve this, compression garments fit tightly to the injured area. Burn scars mature in 9 months to 3 years. You will need to wear these garments for at least 6 months and sometimes as long as 2-3 years. Your provider will decide when you can stop wearing your compression garments.

### Measuring and Fitting

Custom compression garments are made to fit each person. This requires exact measuring of the body parts to be covered. Many colors and options exist to help make wearing them more pleasant. As time goes on you may need to be remeasured for your compression garments by your fitter. The garment will fit snugly. A garment that is too loose will have wrinkles and will be of little benefit to you. A garment that fits too tightly will cause numbness, tingling, and sometimes pain. If you have any of these symptoms, remove the garment and call your fitter. Always bring the garments with you to your clinic visits so that we can check their fit.

### Wear and Care

Garments need to be worn 7 days a week, 23-24 hours daily. They are removed for bathing and if they interfere with therapy. During the first week or two of wearing the compression garment, it is common to have blisters and skin breakdown over areas of new skin. If this occurs, call your fitter, stop wearing the garments for 2-3 days until the open areas heal, and then resume wearing them.

Garments should be washed every day by hand in warm water and mild soap (Ivory<sup>®</sup>, Dove<sup>®</sup>, Dial<sup>®</sup>) and allowed to air dry. It is a good idea to have two complete sets of garments so that a clean set is always ready to wear and provide constant pressure on the burn scars. Garments often last 2-3 months before stretching out. They are of no help if they are stretched out and do not fit snugly. Order new garments 2-3 weeks in advance to always have good fitting garments. Call us at **(608) 264-8040** or message us on MyChart to reorder. If you receive garments in the mail that do not fit or are defective, they may be returned and replaced. Most companies will do this free if told of the problem within 7-10 days.

### It is up to you!

If you wear the garments as prescribed, you should have softer, smoother scars. The garments do not return your skin to how it appeared prior to your injury, but they will help you achieve the best outcome.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 8/2022 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4610.