



**JOBST**<sup>®</sup>

Comfort, Health and Style!

# MANAGING LYMPHEDEMA

A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS USING ELVAREX<sup>®</sup>  
AND ELVAREX<sup>®</sup> SOFT GARMENTS

THERAPIES. HAND IN HAND.

**BSN**medical  
an SCA company

## WHAT IS LYMPHEDEMA?



Lymphedema is a disorder of the lymphatic system. The lymphatic system delivers nutrients to body tissues and removes waste products. It operates similarly to the circulatory system but is a separate system. While the circulatory system relies on the heart to pump blood around the body, the lymphatic system relies on routine movement of the muscles and joints to push lymph fluid through the body.

If a section of the lymphatic system is blocked or damaged, normal drainage may be slowed or stopped, resulting in swelling or lymphedema.

The word “lymphedema” means swelling (edema) that results from the pooling of too much lymph fluid in areas of the body. This swelling occurs most often in the arms and legs, but it can also affect the face, neck, abdomen, or genitals. It is estimated that 5 million Americans suffer from lymphedema.

## CAN LYMPHEDEMA GET WORSE?

If lymphedema is not treated correctly, it can change from a relatively mild problem into a far more serious one. Mild lymphedema, which involves only swelling, can be relieved and reversed by keeping the affected limb(s) elevated above the level of the heart. In moderate lymphedema, the body has begun to respond to the swelling by forming scar tissue, which can be treated. If untreated, moderate lymphedema can lead to progressive thickening and hardening of the skin and other tissues, even greater swelling, and the appearance of abnormal growths on the surface of the skin. Additionally, people with lymphedema frequently develop skin infections. These infections are most common in moderate to severe lymphedema, and can further worsen the condition, making frequent hospitalization necessary for treatment.

## HOW CAN LYMPHEDEMA BE MANAGED?

The most common procedure for managing lymphedema is called Complex or Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT). CDT has two phases: phase I, reduction and phase II, maintenance, each consisting of four elements. All the elements have specific contributions and can only be effective if applied together. The four elements of CDT are:

- Skin Care
- Manual lymph drainage (MLD)
- Compression therapy
- Exercise therapy

Short stretch bandaging is used in the reduction phase. Once the swelling is reduced and stabilized, the limb can then be fitted for a special compression garment, such as Elvarex® or Elvarex® Soft. These garments will help control your condition.

## USING YOUR ELVAREX/ELVAREX SOFT GARMENT TO CONTROL LYMPHEDEMA

Your health professional has recommended that you wear an Elvarex or Elvarex Soft garment because it offers:

- Custom manufacturing that ensures a contoured fit to the shape of the limb
- Controlled gradient compression for effective long-term management of lymphedema
- Superior comfort due to air permeability
- Excellent durability for extended garment wear

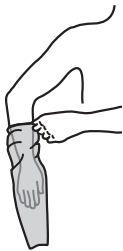
## GENERAL ELVAREX/ELVAREX SOFT DONNING INSTRUCTIONS: APPLICATION, USE, AND CARE

By following the illustrated steps below, you will be able to put on the Elvarex garment correctly.

Avoid sticking your fingernails into the knitted material of the garment when pulling it on and do not stretch the material any more than necessary. To avoid damage to the material, do not wear jewelry while putting on or taking off the garment. The use of rubber gloves is recommended.

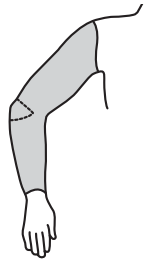
The garment should be applied as early as possible each morning.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUTTING ON THE ELVAREX/ELVAREX SOFT SLEEVE/GLOVES



1. Slip your hand through the entire sleeve, keeping the seam in line with your little finger. Ease the sleeve up your arm to the armpit. Stitching indicates where your elbow should be. It may be helpful to brace your hand against a wall to pull the sleeve into position.

2. The compression sleeve is placed when it is situated smoothly on the arm without any creases. In the case of a sleeve with a separate glove, the ends of the two garments must overlap.



3. Slip your hand through the wrist of the glove and into the fingers.

4. Adjust the fingers by carefully pulling on the fabric until the glove fits snugly into the web spaces between the fingers. Be sure the

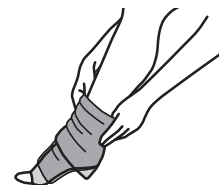
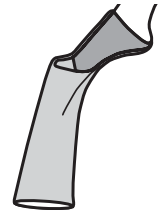
fabric is smoothed out over the finger and hand. Hold the hand up to the light. You should not be able to see light through the web space.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUTTING ON THE KNEE-LENGTH ELVAREX/ELVAREX SOFT GARMENT



1. Starting with the garment inside out, tuck the foot portion inside up to the heel and hold it with both hands, seams facing down.

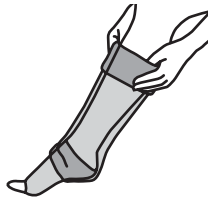
2. Stretch your garment as wide as possible and, in one motion, pull it onto your foot. Put the heel pocket over the back of the heel.



3. Take hold of the fabric just past your toes. Always grasp the garment at the sides, never at the seams.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUTTING ON THE KNEE-LENGTH ELVAREX/ELVAREX SOFT GARMENT (CONT'D)

4. Pull it up over your foot past the ankle. The garment should now be right side out. Adjust it so that the heel is in place.



5. Adjust the toe area for comfort by pulling the garment toward your toes and releasing.

6. Now work it all the way to the knee, about 2 inches at a time, smoothing the creases as you go up. For knee-length garments, the top band should reach within 1 inch of the bend of your knee. Remember, pull on the sides, never at the top or the seams.



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUTTING ON THE THIGH-LENGTH ELVAREX/ELVAREX SOFT GARMENT

1. Start with instructions for knee-length garments. Continue working the garment up about 2 inches at a time.



2. If using a garter belt, stretch the fabric evenly and fasten to a garter belt. If it is uncomfortable behind the knee, ease it down slightly from the knee until the pressure feels more even.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUTTING ON THE WAIST-HEIGHT ELVAREX/ELVAREX SOFT GARMENT

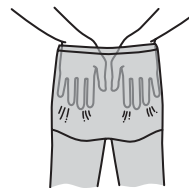


1. Start with the instructions for knee-length garments. Continue working it up to the middle of your thigh about 2 inches at a time.

2. Stand up. With both hands, grab a handful of fabric and pull it up to your waist.

3. Fit it snugly but comfortably over the groin area.

4. Adjust your support so that it is snug at your midsection. This will keep the garment from sliding down. Pull the midsection to its proper height.



5. Slip your hands, palm out, into the back and lift the fabric up and away from your skin. Let the fabric fall back to fit snugly over the buttocks.

## IMPORTANT NOTES

- Keep your regular check-ups with your healthcare provider.
- Elvarex garments are supplied with a special 6-month warranty on material flaws and manufacturing defects. However, you should examine your garments for signs of wear to ensure they are still effective.

For further warranty information, please call Customer Service at **1-800-537-1063**.

- Compression garments can be worn for up to 16 hours a day but must be removed at bedtime.

## IMPORTANT NOTES (CONT'D)

- Any open wounds should be covered with a sterile dressing prior to putting on the compression garment.
- Since the garment should be washed daily, you may find it practical to have several garments so that you will have a garment to wear while you launder and dry other garments (see garment-care instructions below).
- Do not cut any loose threads or snags, as this may cause runs or holes in the garment.


## INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING CARE OF YOUR ELVAREX/ELVAREX SOFT GARMENTS


JOBST Elvarex/Elvarex Soft compression gloves, sleeves, and stockings are manufactured from the highest-quality materials. They can be machine washed on a gentle cycle in lukewarm water 104°F (40°C) with a mild detergent (JOBST® Jolastic® Special Washing Solution is recommended). After washing the garment, lay it on a thick towel, roll it up, and squeeze it hard to remove excess water. Then, either loosely hang the garment out or lay flat on a towel to dry, always keeping the garment out of direct sunlight.


Be sure to follow these precautions to get the longest life from your Elvarex garments:


Do not use fabric softeners.

 Machine wash – gentle cycle.


 Do not use bleach.

 Do not tumble dry.

 Do not dry clean.

 Do not iron.

 Dry flat, or

 Line dry in the shade.

## WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO ABOUT YOUR LYMPHEDEMA?

The following recommendations apply only to the area of your body affected by lymphedema.

### **Keep the affected area very clean:**

- Wash skin thoroughly and frequently
- Keep your skin moist to avoid drying and cracking
- Use special lotions to protect your skin from germs; ask your doctor or pharmacist about “low-pH” lotions.

### **Avoid injuries to the skin that can lead to infection, such as:**

- Scratches or bites from pets or other animals
- Bites or stings from insects
- Unnecessary skin punctures (vaccines, venipuncture, acupuncture, piercing)
- Chronic behaviors, like scratching your skin or biting your nails.

### **Avoid other activities that can cause more extensive trauma to the delicate lymphatic vessels, such as:**

- Excessive strain during exercise
- Physical overexertion (heavy lifting, joint over-rotation) of affected limb(s)
- Restriction of blood and lymph circulation by blood-pressure cuffs, elastic garments or bandages that are too tight, tight bra straps, waist bands, watches, rings
- Any physical injuries that can bruise your skin
- Unnecessary surgical procedures
- Burns from heat sources, including the sun.

### **Avoid temperature extremes that can stress the lymphatic system, such as:**

- Frostbite or extreme cold
- Extreme heat from saunas, whirlpools, hot weather
- Heat treatments, hot packs, etc.

## WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO ABOUT YOUR LYMPHEDEMA? (CONT'D)

### Consider other lifestyle changes that may reduce the risk of starting or worsening lymphedema:

- When traveling in an airplane, use a compression garment or bandaging, e.g., Comprilan®
- Keep your body weight at optimal levels, since obesity can worsen pre-existing lymphedema
- Exercise regularly (special exercises are recommended)
- Seek medical assistance immediately if you think you may be developing a skin infection
- Continue to seek appropriate treatment for your lymphedema.

## QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FOR JOBST?

If you have any questions concerning the information presented in this brochure or about your Elvarex compression garment, please call our Customer Service line at **1-800-537-1063** or visit our web site at **www.jobst.com** for more information.

Thank you for your continued confidence in and patronage of Jobst products. We look forward to helping you in the future by developing additional innovative products.

Caution: Elvarex contains Natural Rubber Latex which may cause allergic reactions.

Note: Elvarex Soft contains a latex-free formula.

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