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# Can Compression Stockings Enhance Your Leg Health?

ankle and gently decreasing this pressure up the leg. Improving blood flow helps the wearer experience immediate relief from tired, aching legs.

Gradient compression leg wear is available in different compression levels to meet the therapy needs of the wearer. Men and women who suffer from chronic venous disease should consult a physician to determine the compression level that is most appropriate for their needs.

The answer to this question is absolutely. Before we explore how and why this is the case, we must first explore the underlying issues associated with venous insufficiency or venous reflux disease.

Venous reflux is often caused by the reduced ability of the veins to move blood back toward the heart. Veins have valves that keep blood moving in one direction back towards the heart. Problems begin to occur when a valve no longer works properly. This allows blood to flow backward in the vein. The backup of blood results in higher pressure in the veins below.

This high pressure may strain the wall of the veins, causing them to enlarge. The high pressure causes more valves to fail with time. The enlarged veins also make the valves below to function less efficiently. This results in the varicose veins getting larger or the development of new varicose veins.

Other signs include swollen ankles and leg discomfort from standing or sitting for long periods of time. This slows the flow of blood, reduces the amount of oxygen supplied to the legs and allows fluid to accumulate. Over a period a time in more severe cases, skin discoloration or venous ulcers can occur in the ankle area.

### Risk Factors

Here are some factors that indicate if you might be pre-disposed to chronic venous disease:

- Heredity (family medical history within a family)
- Prolonged standing or sitting
- Heavy lifting
- Hormonal influences
- Pregnancy
- Obesity

### How does Compression Therapy Work?

Compression therapy, when applied in a gradient manner, counters the high pressures that can develop in the legs. Gradient compression socks or stockings help improve the blood flow by compressing the veins and making the valves in the veins work more efficiently.

This is done by delivering the highest level of compression at the

### Maintaining Leg Health

Maintaining leg health is a life long activity. The regular use of compression garments helps to counter the damaging effects of high pressure in the veins. It also helps improve circulation. Taking steps to improve blood flow helps reduce the chances of developing chronic venous disease and helps manage varicose veins.

### These steps include:

- Regular exercise

- Eating a balanced diet
- Wearing comfortable shoes
- Not standing or sitting for long periods of time
- Not crossing your legs while sitting

If wearing the compression stockings are merely controlling your symptoms and these symptoms reoccur once the stockings are removed, then you should visit a vein specialist for a more permanent solution to your vein issues.

**Center for Vein Restoration**



# LOVE YOUR LEGS *again!*

Do your legs feel tired, achy and heavy?  
 Do your legs and ankles swell by the end of the day?  
 Do you have bulgy-veined and painful legs?

**Sanjiv Lakhanpal, M.D.,  
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*Voted "Top Doctor" by Washingtonian Magazine*

**CardioThoracic & Vascular Surgery Associates**  
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