

SIGVARIS

LIFE FOR LEGS

How compression stockings
help your veins



The single most important thing about vein therapy:
The regular wearing of compression stockings





Dear customer,

Weakness of the veins (phlebasthenia) is a frequent disease. Roughly one man in five and one woman in four have this condition*. There can be many causes for it. Patients are often genetically predisposed, and a lack of movement – due to activities carried out mainly in a seated or standing position – can also lead to venous diseases.

Wearing compression stockings regularly will improve your health and quality of life decisively. Thanks to targeted compression exerted on your legs, your veins will be brought back into shape naturally and their functioning will be supported.

When you received professional advice at your specialist shop, you were informed about the benefits of medical compression stockings and about how to handle them. On the following pages we illustrate once again and in greater depth why it is so important to wear compression stockings daily.

We hope that this brochure will be able to provide you with useful information.

Your SIGVARIS® Team

*Source: Bonn Vein Study

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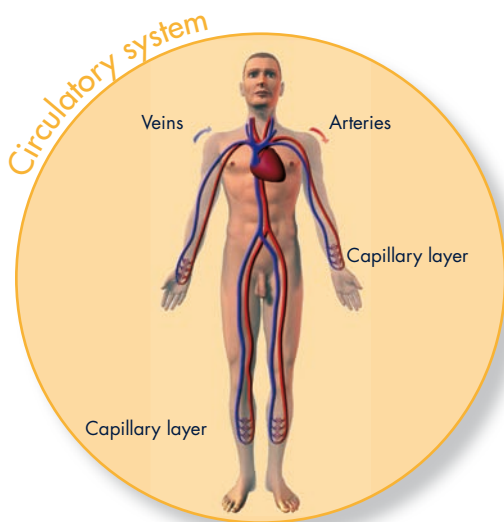
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Things to know about veins: Healthy veins

How does the circulatory system work?

Arteries carry blood away from the heart. They make sure that oxygen and nutrients reach the organs and tissues. The veins then collect the oxygen-depleted "used" blood in their capillary layer, such as in the hands and feet.



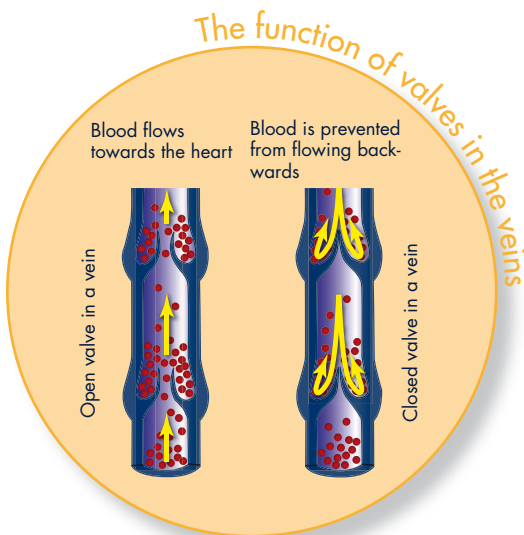
What is the job of veins?

The main task of the veins is to carry blood back to the heart. We can distinguish between two different types of veins in the legs: surface veins and deep veins. Surface veins are smaller and finer. They run just under the skin and in many people are easily visible. They carry the blood to the large deep veins that run through the muscles. Most of the blood (90%) is carried by the deep veins away from the legs towards the heart.

How is a vein constructed?

In comparison to arteries, veins have a far thinner muscle layer and are far more elastic. This means that large quantities of blood can collect in the veins. To prevent blood from flowing backwards, many large veins differ from arteries in that they are equipped with valves.

These valves in the veins guide blood up from the feet in the direction of the heart. They are particularly numerous in those veins in which the blood flows against gravity, for example, in the legs. Here the valves in the veins function as check valves. As long as the blood flows in the direction of the heart, the valves open. If gravity pulls the blood towards the feet, then the valves close.

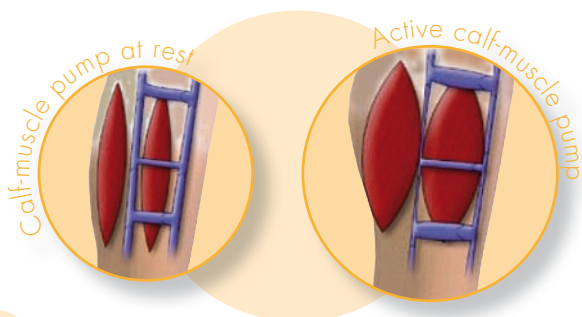


How is blood pumped “upwards”?

The most important mechanism involved in transporting blood from the feet back to the heart is the so-called “calf-muscle pump.” When the legs move, in particular when we walk, the calf muscles are exerted.

This causes squeezing of the deep leg veins running between the calf muscles. The valves in the veins open, and blood contained in the veins is pushed “upwards” against gravity.

When the calf muscles relax, pressure on the veins is reduced and they enlarge. The flow of blood to the heart slows down, and the valves in the veins close so that the blood does not flow back in the wrong direction. At the same time, the emptied veins fill up again with “fresh” blood from the surface venous system.



Things to know about veins: Diseased veins

If the venous system weakens, blood is no longer transported to the heart correctly. It slows down, builds up, or sometimes possibly flows backwards. The legs swell and start to ache. The veins cannot withstand the increasing pressure and, in the worst case, even lose their elasticity and stretch out, following which varicose veins can occur. As a whole, complaints associated with these problems are known as chronic venous insufficiency (CVI).

What long-term damage can occur?

● Spider veins

Small visible veins just below the surface of the skin can be the first signs of a problem with venous circulation

● Varicose veins

Dilated, snake-like veins. Varicose veins on the surface are easy to see or feel. Varicose veins in the deep vein system cannot be seen with the naked eye. Please never massage them!

● Inflammation of the veins (phlebitis)

This condition leads to pain in the blood vessels and in the surrounding tissues, and the legs become reddened, swollen and overheated. In the case of surface veins, inflammation is often easy to recognize. When the deep veins are inflamed, the diagnosis is difficult to make even using ultrasound techniques. It is still not clear how phlebitis occurs.

● Blood clots (thromboses)

Obstruction of veins due to blood clots that have formed in them and have stuck to the vein walls. This condition can be particularly dangerous if the blood clots become detached and are transported into the lungs.



● Foot ulcers (ulcus cruris)

This is the consequence of long-term venous congestion, often existing for years. The term *ulcus cruris* is used to indicate an ulcer, usually open, on the lower leg. There are two types: venous ulcers (*ulcus cruris venosum*) and arterial ulcers, although the latter rarely occur.

Compression stockings – just another pair of stockings?

For decades, compression treatment has been clinically recognized as a purely physical method for treating venous and lymphatic disorders by applying pressure to tissues and blood vessels. This is best achieved by means of medical compression stockings. In order to produce this effect, medical compression stockings must meet special requirements. A special knit ensures controlled graduation of the pressure exerted on the leg, decreasing upwards from the ankle to the thigh. This pattern of pressure is confirmed in the standards of the German association for quality branding of medical compression stockings ("GZG")¹ and is a prerequisite for partial reimbursement of the cost of the stockings by health insurers.

How do medical compression stockings work?

Compression treatment is the basic therapy for chronic weakness of the veins. The principle is as simple as it is effective: through targeted pressure on the tissues and blood vessels, the veins are squeezed back to their normal diameter. The functioning of the as-yet undamaged valves in the veins is supported, the speed at which blood flows through the veins increases, and circulation is improved. This decreases the risk of blood clots forming in the veins. The most important effect of compression stockings is that of providing support for the "calf-muscle pump." They apply a counter-pressure onto the calf muscles being moved, which intensifies the flow of blood back to the heart. This means that compression stockings can develop their full capabilities only when the legs are being moved.

Prescription compression stockings?

Compression stockings are used for long-term and continuous therapy of venous diseases. A prerequisite for successful treatment is that the pressure of the stockings must be calibrated precisely based on the patient's individual disease profile.

It is therefore important that a doctor should write a prescription indicating the purpose of the therapy and the recommended class of compression. Your specialist dealer will then work with you to find the right stockings for your particular lifestyle.

What are the differences between support stockings and medical compression stockings?

	Support stockings	Medical compression stockings
Diagnosis of venous disease (e.g. by a phlebologist)		✓
Only for people with healthy veins	✓	
Controlled distribution of the pressure		✓
Therapeutic effect proven by clinical studies		✓
Qualify for reimbursement		✓
Fitted individually, if necessary even custom made		✓
Size depending on individual length and circumference		✓
GZG Quality Seal		✓

Important!

Support stockings are not suitable for therapeutic use. If you have a diagnosed venous disease, you should wear medical compression stockings!

Compression stockings in everyday life

What is the best way to put them on and remove them?

Compression stockings can only be effective as a long-term or continuous therapy if they are worn regularly. You will find important tips for handling compression stockings in the instructions for use that accompany each pack. SIGVARIS can provide you with practical aids for making it easier to put on and remove your stockings in everyday situations. They are effective and essential aids for everyone who wears compression stockings or panty hose, whether open- or closed-toed.

SIGVARIS aids for putting on stockings

1 Slip On SIGVARIS (SOS)



Important:

- 2
 - Always wear the special SIGVARIS rubber gloves
 - Put your stockings on first thing in the morning when you get up
 - If your legs have reduced swelling or are dry, it is best put the stockings on after lightly applying powder



How do you care for medical compression stockings?

In order to preserve the quality and therefore the medical effectiveness of your compression stockings for as long as possible, special products for caring for them are a must. Here again SIGVARIS offers a comprehensive assortment of products. The product line ranges from Clean Pads for properly cleaning the grip tops of your stockings to SIGVARIS SWS Washing Solution, a high-quality laundering product developed specifically for the care of compression stockings.



Clean Pads



Washing Solution



The instructions for use contained in every product package provide useful information about how to use and care for your compression stockings.

Instruction manual



- Everything about putting on and removing medical compression stockings, including instructions for care.

In addition, brochures dealing in-depth with compression treatment are also available.

Ask for the following brochures in your specialist shop:

The “When your legs ache” brochure



- Useful tips for everyday use plus exercises and Kneipp treatments for improving vein functions.

The “Product assortment for the end user” brochure



- An overview of the broad range of SIGVARIS products – compression stockings and accessory products by the world market leader from Switzerland.

The “Pregnancy” brochure

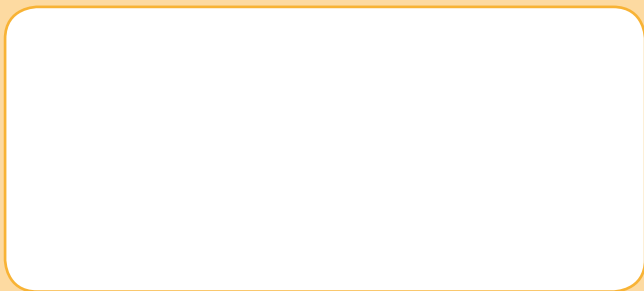


- Explanation of the reasons for venous function problems during pregnancy and of the importance of medical compression stockings during pregnancy.

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Do you have any more questions on the subject of healthy veins?
Then feel free to ask at your SIGVARIS specialist shop at any
time with complete confidence.



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SIGVARIS is the world market leader in the field of medical
compression stockings, available in over 70 countries.

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