Gradient Edema Bandaging for the Lower Leg

*With Short-stretch Bandages*

Correct bandaging is vital to drain the fluid from the leg.
Follow the steps listed here. If you have questions, please talk to your therapist.

**Materials:**

- Lotion (neutral pH, unscented)
- Leg stocking (stockinette)
- Scissors
- Toe bandage (4 cm or 2 cm gauze), such as Transelast or KT
- Roll of synthetic (human-made) cotton padding (10 or 15 cm), such as Artiflex
- Roll of foam padding (10 cm)
- Short-stretch bandages:
  - 6 cm roll
  - 8 cm roll
  - Two 10 cm × 5 m rolls
- Masking tape (or extra-adhesive tape), cut into several 3- to 4-inch pieces

**Note:** Always keep the bandage in a “snail” position (bandage rolls out from the bottom).
1. Place the **stocking** on your leg. To do this:
   a. Put lotion on the skin of your leg.
   b. Pull the stocking to the top your leg. It should cover your toes.
   c. Cut the stocking to size. (Do this after it’s on the leg, so you know it will be long enough.)
   d. Pull the entire stocking back toward your ankle. Your foot should be bare.

2. Use the **toe bandage** to wrap each toe. To do this:
   a. Your bandage must be 2 cm wide. If you are using a 4 cm bandage, fold it in half lengthwise.
   b. Wrap the bandage once below the base of your toes.
   c. Cross the top of your foot. Start at the cuticle of the fourth toe. (Do not wrap the little toe.) Wrap to the base of the toe.
   d. Wrap down and around the foot, then start again at the cuticle of your third toe. Repeat for your second toe and your big toe.
   e. If you have any bandage leftover, wrap it loosely around the foot.

3. Pull the stocking over the foot and toes.
4. Wrap the roll of cotton padding around your foot and ankle. Your therapist will tell you which method to use.

Notes: ________________________________________________
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☐ Simple method:
  a. Start at the base of the toes.
  b. Wrap around the foot and up the ankle.

☐ Padded method:
  a. Start at the base of the toes. Wrap twice around the foot.
  b. Cross up to the front of the ankle.
  c. Fold the padding like an accordion (make three layers at the front of the ankle). Place the layers at the front where the ankle meets the foot.
  d. Wrap behind the ankle, then back to the top of foot. This will hold your layers in place.
  e. Wrap up the entire foot, heel and ankle.
5. Pull the stocking back onto the base of the toes, over the padding.

6. Wrap the 10 cm foam padding around the lower leg.
   a. Start at the ankle and wrap upward. End just below the knee.
   b. As you move up the leg, overlap by \( \frac{1}{2} \) the width of the padding.

7. Roll the top of the stocking onto the foam. This holds the foam in place at the knee.
8. Wrap the 6 cm (narrow) bandage around your foot and ankle.
   To do this:

   a. Wrap once around to the top of the foot, near the base of the toes.
      Hold your foot and ankle at a 90-degree angle.

   b. Wrap around the base of the toes three times. Cross the top of the
      foot, around the base of the heel and back to the top of the foot.

   c. Repeat, wrapping the rest of the foot and ankle. (This bandage will
      not cover the heel.) As you wrap, overlap the bandage by ½ inch.

   d. End the bandage around the ankle. Tape the bandage in place.
      (Always tape bandage to bandage, never to foam or padding.)
9. Wrap the 8 cm bandage once around your ankle and then down around your foot. Remember HAS (heel-ankle-sole).
   a. Lead the bandage toward the heel, placing the angle of the heel into the center of the bandage.
   b. Wrap around the ankle. You will overlap the bandage that's around the heel.
   c. Wrap around the sole of the foot. You will overlap the bandage that's around the heel.
   d. Repeat. When the bandage ends, tape it in place.

10. Use one 10 cm × 5 m bandage to wrap the leg. Be sure to gently stretch the bandage on both the inside and outside of the leg.
    a. Start at the ankle and wrap upward. Overlap ¾ of the bandage width. End just below the knee.
    b. Repeat with another 10 cm × 5 m bandage (optional).
    c. Tape the bandage in place.

11. Tape the foot bandage so it doesn’t come loose (optional).