ConvaTec™ Adaptive Compression Therapy
Key Publication Summary

Title: Classification of compression bandages: practical aspects.

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Abstract:
BACKGROUND: Compression bandages appear to be simple medical devices. However, there is a lack of agreement over their classification and confusion over the use of important terms such as elastic, inelastic, and stiffness.
OBJECTIVES: The objectives were to propose terms to describe both simple and complex compression bandage systems and to offer classification based on in vivo measurements of sub-bandage pressure and stiffness.
METHODS: A consensus meeting of experts including members from medical professions and from companies producing compression products discussed a proposal that was sent out beforehand and agreed on by the authors after correction.
RESULTS: Pressure, layers, components, and elastic properties (P-LA-C-E) are the important characteristics of compression bandages. Based on simple in vivo measurements, pressure ranges and elastic properties of different bandage systems can be described. Descriptions of composite bandages should also report the number of layers of bandage material applied to the leg and the components that have been used to create the final bandage system.
CONCLUSION: Future descriptions of compression bandages should include the sub-bandage pressure range measured in the medial gaiter area, the number of layers, and a specification of the bandage components and of the elastic property (stiffness) of the final bandage.

Summary:
This paper is the consensus of a group of leading experts in the area of medical compression bandages (MCB) who focused on classification of bandages. Until publication of this consensus, only the United Kingdom had an officially-recognised national standard for MCB. The key recommendations were that the main factors in classification are Pressure, Layers, Components and Elastic properties. Pressure should be measured in a supine patient at the medial gaiter area; compression pressure ranges delivered by MCB are classified into four groups; a double layer bandage has an overlap of 50% whereas more layers should be referred to as “multilayer” rather than e.g. 4-layer bandage; bandages often consist of more than one component with different functions in the applied product; the elastic properties describe an inelastic product (rigid or short-stretch) or elastic (long-stretch) bandage in its applied form. The paper states that stiffness is characterised by the increase in gaiter pressure when standing up from the supine position. A difference of >10 mmHg defines a stiff bandage system.