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❖ Practice Limited to Vascular/Endovascular Surgery & Vein Surgery/Endovenous Interventions ❖

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Graded Compression Hose Instructions

It is absolutely critical that you follow all of the instructions regarding the graded compression hose that Dr. Tahara has prescribed. Failing to obtain the proper brand and type of stockings, care for them properly, or wear them properly will cause you to:

- spend far more money than would be necessary if you simply followed our guidelines
- expose you to the risk of your disease worsening and having complications like:
 - ** worsening pain, skin changes, and swelling
 - ** DVT (clot) and/or pulmonary embolism. In some severe cases this may prove fatal!

**Please read this entire sheet before going for
your measurements or buying hose!!**

Getting the stockings:

*You will be given a prescription for the hose to be filled at a durable medical equipment (DME) supplier. Unfortunately most drugstores / pharmacies / WalMart / etc carry lower grade hose that will be inadequate for your needs

*Please ensure you get the proper brand. We recommend only Juzo and Jobst stockings currently. Juzo is the far preferred brand and this is what Dr. Tahara encourages his patients to get (these are the type he personally wears!)

*You get what you pay for -> trying to buy an economy set of stockings will generally backfire. As more and more insurance plans place tighter and tighter restrictions on vein care, you will find that your out of pocket expenses for non-covered procedures will run into the thousands of dollars. These costs can often be prevented by proper graded compression hose - if you try to save a few dollars on the hose this may well cost you thousands in preventable expenses later. This is not theoretical and unfortunately happens to patients every month in our practice.

*Generally, these stockings will cost you approximately \$70-\$80 per pair. We recommend you use a bare minimum of 4 pairs. We recommend you be sure to

get your initial stockings through one of our local DME's so if there are any problems with fit or defects this can be dealt with by the DME. Some patients are able to find online deals on the price of the stockings but if there is any problem with fit or defects they end up eating the entire amount which usually renders any savings a fiction.

*The stockings come with 2 major "flavors" at the top: a plain top and one that can be purchased with a row of silicone beads. If your legs are hairy you will need the plain tops but will need to buy "It Stays". This is a glue product that prevents the stockings from rolling down and causing issues (see below). If you do not have hairy legs, we strongly recommend you add the option to get silicone beading at the top. The cost is nearly the same as the glue but the silicone is easier to deal with and eliminates having to apply glue to your leg every morning. In our experience if you can use the silicone you will be happier! About 2-5% of people have or will develop a silicone sensitivity; this small minority of patients will need to use "It Stays" as their only option

*Your appointment for fitting will generally be in the morning so that you can be measured before your legs start to swell. Also, for this appointment, please wear loose fitting pants and shoes that are easy for you to get on and off.

Wearing and caring for your stockings:

*When your 4 (or more) pairs of stockings arrive please unbox then and inspect for defects. When you receive your stockings, please only try on *one pair* to ensure that they are a good fit. Once you have worn a pair of these stockings, they **MAY NOT BE RETURNED**. Please be careful when putting stockings on and off if you wear jewelry, they may snag or rip the material.

*Once you are sure the stockings are all the right size and model it is essential to label them. We recommend using a Sharpie magic marker and labeling them numerically as pairs "1", "2", "3", "4" etc. Please label both socks in each pair the same (i.e. "1" and "1") so that you can keep the pairs together so they wear evenly and are rotated properly

*You will wear your hose in a strict rotation. Wear pair 1 the first day, pair 2 the second day, pair 3 the third day, pair 4 the fourth day and so on. When you reach the end of the rotation you go back to the beginning and wear pair 1.

*After you have worn a pair they must be laundered prior to being worn again. You can either machine or hand wash them but it is **CRITICAL** that they are dried in the **DRYER**. Yes, tumble dried! Do not hang them or they will wear out far prematurely and will waste your money.

*Over the years we have found that the stockings require 2 things to maintain their effect: 1) ~72hours between wearing them (hence the 4 pair rotation requirement and labeling) **-and-** 2) heat from tumble drying. Failure to do both of

these functions will cause the hose to stretch and not regain their shape, size, or compression gradient. Functionally, this means they will be shot by about 2 months instead of the usual 6 months lifespan if you follow these directions

*When putting the stockings on it is essential that there are no folds or rolls in the fabric or you may cause a wound. This is why we recommend you use either plain top stockings + "It Stays" -or- opt for adding silicone beads to the hose. This is also why we do **not** recommend toeless stockings for most of our patients: the ends roll and you can develop a wound at the base of your toes. Dr. Tahara is forced to do several toe amputations a year because of this type of problem so it is best avoided by wearing a full foot stocking. This is particularly true if you are over 60 years of age and/or diabetic.

*When putting the stockings on they should come up to just below the knee. If you pull them up too far you can get them all the way up your thigh if you try hard enough! Please do not roll them or fold them over! This will cause a tourniquet effect and make the problem worse. If you have pulled them up over your knee, you will need to slide the stocking all the way back down and reapply it without pulling it so tightly/stretching it out too much. Generally this takes about 2 weeks for most patients to learn how hard to pull them up.

*For patients with limited hand and arm strength, and/or back and neck issues, there assistive devices available. The most useful is the Jobst metal stocking donner. This is widely available (Amazon.com, local DME) for about \$24. They last forever and work well. We do not recommend the plastic donners as they tend to break and you end up paying for them repetitively over time. There is now a plastic "reverse donner" that assists you in pushing the hose down to remove them at night which many patients find greatly helps them remove the stockings.

*Please get the stockings on first thing in the morning and wear them all day long until you go to bed at night. This means: **from the time you get out of bed until you go back to bed at night.** We strongly recommend against taking them off in the late afternoon or early evening as most people are up for several more hours and this severely limits the amount of benefit you will get from wearing them.

*If the swelling is still not controlled, the doctor may ask you to wear them even in bed - this is rarely required and usually only with patients that have ulcers or sleep relatively upright like in a chair or recliner instead of bed.

*The hose may seem tight or may even seem to increase the discomfort in your legs initially, but this will decrease as you wear the stockings more frequently. Please be patient and do not take them off! If you find that the discomfort is unbearable, please call our office - DO NOT JUST STOP THEM!! It generally takes about 2 weeks for most patients to get past this issue as your chronically swollen legs will not like the compression initially.

*In some cases we may have to change the amount of compression or squeeze on your legs according to your response to treatment. For most patients this will not be necessary.

*After you receive your stockings, we will see you back in the office 6-8 weeks later to re-assess your legs AND your response to treatment. If you have any questions or concerns prior to that please call the office - DO NOT JUST STOP WEARING THE HOSE!

Replacing the stockings:

*The full set of 4+ pairs of stockings will need replaced at least every 6 months. Some may wear out sooner depending on wear, the severity of your disease, and the size of the patient. Oftentimes patients are fooled by the fact that they still feel "tight" and keep them in service well beyond their functional life. The stockings will lose their gradient first so they may still feel "tight" but be giving you no benefit or actually creating other problems. This is a poor way to try to save money as the added cost of preventable procedures is always many times over the amount the patient thinks they are saving by trying to stretch out the replacement of their stockings.

*When your new stockings come in THROW the old ones AWAY. Do not keep them as a "spare" as they always find their way back into the rotation and create a much less effective compression regimen.

We realize that it will not always be easy or convenient to wear these stockings, but knowing that they will help control and prevent future problems with your legs will help you stay committed to your treatment.

These stockings may seem costly but are an important investment in the health and comfort of your legs. To ensure that you get the most out of your stockings it is imperative to purchase the right type, wear and care for them correctly, replace them at the appropriate interval. The vast majority of problems we see our patients having are preventable if you follow the simple steps outlined above. Please do not be smarter than us! Everything in this document is time tested and is the cheapest, easiest, and most effective way for you to get the best result from the treatment of your venous disease!!