

Medical Policy



Pressure Gradient Garments and Support Stockings

▼ Description

Pressure gradient garments are designed to promote and restore normal fluid circulation to the extremities as well as to minimize excessive scarring responses in burn victims. The garments are custom made from precise measurements of the body and can vary from lymphedema sleeves for the arm, knee length to full-length stockings, waist high leotard, to various other body parts such as the hands.

▼ Policy

High compression support stockings, socks and hosiery provide increased support for relief from:

- Moderate to severe varicosities (varicose veins)
- Moderate edema (swelling) of legs, ankles and feet
- Moderate to severe varicose veins during pregnancy
- Severe edema and lymphedema

They can also assist in:

- Management of active venous ulcerations
- Preventing recurrence of venous ulcerations
- Preventing post-thrombotic syndrome. This is a complication that may follow a deep vein thrombosis and includes symptoms such as edema, purpura, increased skin pigmentation, itchiness, rash, ulceration and cellulitis.

Clinical evidence shows that pressure gradient garments and support stockings play a part in lowering the risk of deep vein thrombosis in post-surgical patients and those patients confined to bed. They are also used in the treatment of venous leg ulcers, severe circulatory conditions, burns and high-risk pregnancy. There is no published literature to support the efficacy of the use of compression garments for the treatment of truncal edema.

A pressure garment is designed to promote and restore normal fluid circulation to the arms and legs as well as to lessen excessive scarring in burn victims. The garments are custom made from exact measurements of the body and can vary from lymphedema sleeves for the arm, knee length to full-length stockings, waist high leotard and to various other body parts such as the hands.

Inclusionary and Exclusionary Guidelines (clinically based guidelines that may support individual consideration and pre-authorization decisions)

Inclusions:

Pressure Gradient Support Garments:

- Pressure gradient support stockings are covered when medically necessary for the treatment of severe circulatory conditions, high-risk pregnancy or post-surgical care.
- Garments must be at or above 18 mmHg.

Limitations:

- No more than four (4) support garments per year.
- Additional support garments will be covered if the member's primary care physician determines they are required due to significant gain or loss in weight or change in the patient's condition.

Burn Pressure Garments:

- Covered for when medically necessary to enhance healing, reduce swelling, treat contractures and hypertrophic scars suffered by severely burned patients.

Limitations;

- None

Elastic Stockings are not a covered benefit as they are available over the counter and do not require a physician prescription and are not considered reasonable and necessary.

Custom-ordered/fitted compression garments (e.g., stocking/burn garment/gradient pressure aid garment/sleeve) are considered reasonable and necessary for patients when the garment functions as a gradient pressure aid with a degree of pressure which is at least 18 mmHg, requires a physician order (prescription) to be dispensed, and meets **one or more** of the following conditions:

- Treatment of complications of chronic venous insufficiency:
 - Varicose veins (except spider veins)
 - Stasis dermatitis (venous eczema)
 - Venous ulcers (stasis ulcers)
 - Venous edema
 - Lipodermatosclerosis
- Prevention of thrombosis in immobilized persons (e.g., immobilization due to surgery, trauma, general debilitation, etc.)
- Post-thrombotic syndrome (post-phlebotic syndrome)

- Chronic lymphedema, including lymphedema as a physical complication of mastectomy
- Edema following surgery, fracture, burns, or other trauma
- Post sclerotherapy
- Postural hypotension
- Severe edema in pregnancy
- DVT prophylaxis during pregnancy and postpartum
- Edema accompanying paraplegia, quadriplegia, etc.
- Orthostatic hypotension
- Significant burn with risk of post burn contracture, skin grafting and hypertrophic scarring
- Compression garments for the chest, labia, trunk or neck are experimental and investigational. There is a lack of peer-reviewed published literature evaluation of the clinical utility of compression garments for these types of lymphedema.

Medicare Information:

GRADIENT COMPRESSION STOCKINGS/WRAPPS (A6531, A6532, A6545):

A gradient compression stocking described by codes A6531 or A6532 or a non-elastic gradient compression wrap described by code A6545 is covered when it is used in the treatment of an open venous stasis ulcer.

Codes A6531, A6532, and A6545 are non-covered for the following conditions: venous insufficiency without stasis ulcers, prevention of stasis ulcers, prevention of the reoccurrence of stasis ulcers that have healed, treatment of lymphedema in the absence of ulcers. In these situations, since there is no ulcer, the stockings/wraps do not meet the definition of a surgical dressing

. Gradient compression stockings described by codes A6530, A6533-A6544, A6549 and surgical stockings described by codes A4490-A4510 are non-covered for all indications because they do not meet the definition of a surgical dressing.

A non-elastic binder for an extremity (A4465) is non-covered for all indications because it does not meet the definition of a surgical dressing.

▼ HCPCS Level II Codes and Description

A4490	Surgical stocking, above knee length, each
A4495	Surgical stockings, thigh length, each
A4500	Surgical Stocking, below knee length, each
A4510	Surgical Stocking, full length, each
A6530	Gradient compression stocking, below knee, 18-30 mmHg, each
A6531	Gradient compression stocking, below knee, 30-40 mmHg, each
A6532	Gradient compression stocking, below knee, 40-50 mmHg, each
A6533	Gradient compression stocking, below knee, 18-30 mmHg, each
A6534	Gradient compression stocking, thigh length, 30-40 mmHg, each
A6535	Gradient compression stocking, thigh length, 40-50 mmHg, each
A6536	Gradient compression stocking, full length, chap style 18-30 mmHg, each
A6537	Gradient compression stocking, full length/chap style, 30-40 mmHg, each
A6538	Gradient compression stocking, full length/chap style, 40-50 mmHg, each
A6539	Gradient compression stocking, waist length, 18-30 mmHg each
A6540	Gradient compression stocking, waist length, 30-40 mmHg, each
A6541	Gradient compression stocking, waist length, 40-50 mmHg, each
A6542	Gradient compression stocking, custom made
A6543	Gradient compression stocking, lymphedema
A6544	Gradient compression stocking, garter belt
A6545	Gradient compression wrap, non-elastic, below knee, 30-50 mmHg each
A6549	Gradient compression stocking, not otherwise specified
A6501	Compression Burn Garment, Bodysuit (Head to Foot), custom fabricated.
A6502	Compression Burn Garment, Chin Strap, Custom Fabricated
A6503	Compression Burn Garment, Facial Hood, Custom Fabricated
A6504	Compression Burn Garment, Glove to Wrist, Custom Fabricated
A6505	Compression Burn Garment, Glove to Elbow, Custom Fabricated.
A6506	Compression Burn Garment, glove to Axilla, Custom Fabricated
A6507	Compression Burn Garment, Foot to Knee Length, Custom Fabricated
A6508	Compression Burn Garment, Foot to Thigh Length, Custom Fabricated

Security Health Plan

Security Health Plan includes the following diagnoses to be included in the criteria for coverage of compression stockings (4 pair per calendar year):

- I 83.9 Asymptomatic varicose veins of unspecified lower extremity
- R 6 Localized Edema
- R6.1 Generalized Edema
- R6.9 Edema Unspecified
- 012.1 Gestational edema, first trimester
- 012.2 Gestational edema, second trimester
- 012.3 Gestational edema, third trimester
- 012.21 Gestational edema with proteinuria, first trimester
- 012.22 Gestational edema with proteinuria, second trimester
- 012.23 Gestational edema with proteinuria, third trimester
- 026.1 Excessive weight gain, first trimester
- 026.2 Excessive weight gain, second trimester
- 026.3 Excessive weight gain, third trimester

▼ Important Note:

Northwood's Medical Policies are developed to assist Northwood in administering plan benefits and determining whether a particular DMEPOS product or service is reasonable and necessary. Equipment that is used primarily and customarily for a non-medical purpose is not considered durable medical equipment.

Coverage determinations are made on a case-by-case basis and are subject to all of the terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions of the member's contract including medical necessity requirements.

The conclusion that a DMEPOS product or service is reasonable and necessary does not constitute coverage. The member's contract defines which DMEPOS product or service is covered, excluded or limited. The policies provide for clearly written, reasonable and current criteria that have been approved by Northwood's Medical Director.

The clinical criteria and medical policies provide guidelines for determining the medical necessity for specific DMEPOS products or services. In all cases, final benefit determinations are based on the applicable contract language. To the extent there are any conflicts between medical policy guidelines and applicable contract language, the contract language prevails. Medical policy is not intended to override the policy that defines the member's benefits, nor is it intended to dictate to providers how to direct care. Northwood Medical policies shall not be interpreted to limit the benefits afforded to Medicare or Medicaid members by law and regulation.

Northwood reserves the right to amend all policies without notice to providers or members.

Northwood's policies do not constitute medical advice. Northwood does not provide or recommend treatment to members. Members should consult with their treating physician in connection with diagnosis and treatment decisions.

▼ **Cross Reference to Related Policies and Procedures**

Northwood Policy: Rental or Purchase of Durable Medical Equipment

Applicable URAC Standard

Core 8	Staff operational tools and support
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Change/Authorization History

Revision Number	Date	Description of Change	Prepared/Reviewed by	Approved by	Review Date:
A	Nov.2008	Initial Release	Rosanne Brugnoni	Ken Fasse	n/a
01		Annual Review	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse	Dec.2008
02	12-22-09	Annual Review/ no changes	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse	Dec.2009
03		Annual review – policy update	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse	Dec.2010
04	07-20-11	Added Important Note to all Medical Policies	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	
05	8-24-11	Added ICD-9 code 459.81 Venous Insufficiency to graph	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	
06	04-04-12	Added reference to NH Medicaid	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	
07	12-3-12	Annual Review – No changes	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	Dec 12
08	12-11-13	Annual review. No changes	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	

09	11-25-14	Annual Review. Added burn garments to this policy and removed them from the surgical dressing policy.	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	
10	06-24-15	Added Security Health Plan inclusion of the following ICD-9 codes for coverage for compression stockings at 4 per calendar year. 454.9 Asymptomatic varicose veins. 782.3 Edema 646.13 Edema or excessive weight gain, antepartum.	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	
11	12-15-15	Annual review. Updated policy with Medicare policy criteria and added ICD-10 Codes for SHP specifically. Removed reference to Diagnosis codes per Medicare policy.	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	