

COMPRESSION BANDAGES

CARE & WASHING

Your compression bandages are specially made, short-stretch bandages. Under normal, daily use these bandages will keep their effective compression for approximately six months. When laundering, there are special guidelines and suggestions we would like to share with you to help ensure the full life of your bandages.

WASHING

- Place bandages loosely folded into a small to medium-sized garment bag.
- Cotton padding materials can be placed inside a length of stockinet, which is then tied off at each end.
- Only use a baby detergent such as Dreft, Ivory Snow or All for babies.
- Do *not* use bleach, fabric softeners or Woolite.
- Wash on a gentle cycle in lukewarm or cold water, do not use hot water.

DRYING

- No heated drying, though you may dry bandages on, 'air,' or, 'fluff,' cycle, keeping bandages in garment bag.
- To air dry, loop bandages several times over a hanger or clothesline. If looped just once the water weight may stretch out the bandage.
- You may also dry bandages by laying them flat on a towel.
- It may be helpful to first gently roll the bandages in towel in order to absorb excess water before hanging.
- It may take the bandages several days to dry, especially in regions with high humidity.

ROLLING

- Well-rolled bandages retain their shape longer and allow for a more effective application of the bandage.
- Start each bandage with a tight initial turn or two and then roll tightly but without stretching the material.
- Some people have found it helpful to roll the bandage around a #2 pencil.
- Secure the rolled bandage with tape or a rubber band.

Your bandages are a key tool in reducing and controlling lymphedema. When you have completed the first phase of treatment you may not use them again for months or years. Yet you should store them in a safe place as part of your, 'lymphedema toolbox,' ready to be pulled out when needed and/or if it makes sense, for a brief period, to return to the therapist for the intensive phase of CDT.