

# Compression Levels

## What are Compression Levels?

The different manufacturers of medical and support hosiery follow different standards to describe the compression capability of the various garments; usually UK or EU (Europe) standards.

These compression ranges can be confusing, so we have adopted a simplified version to reduce the chance of you purchasing compression stockings of the wrong compression level.

The chart below shows where the different standards fit in with our own classification.

Remember a suitably qualified Doctor, rather than the patient, should decide which level of compression is correct for each individual.

| Classification                      | Description        | UK Standard    | mm Hg at Ankle | EU Standard    | EU mm HG range |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>EXTRA LIGHT</b><br>UP TO 14 MMHG | <b>Extra Light</b> | -              | <b>&lt;14</b>  | -              | -              |
| <b>LIGHT</b><br>14 - 17 MMHG        | <b>Light</b>       | <b>Class 1</b> | <b>14-17</b>   | -              | -              |
| <b>MODERATE</b><br>18 - 24 MMHG     | <b>Moderate</b>    | <b>Class 2</b> | <b>18-24</b>   | <b>Class 1</b> | <b>18-21</b>   |
| <b>FIRM</b><br>23 - 35 MMHG         | <b>Firm</b>        | <b>Class 3</b> | <b>23-35</b>   | <b>Class 2</b> | <b>23-32</b>   |
| <b>EXTRA FIRM</b><br>OVER 35 MMHG   | <b>Extra Firm</b>  | -              | <b>34-46</b>   | <b>Class 3</b> | <b>34-46</b>   |

## What is 'Graduated Compression'?

1. Graduated compression hosiery, is hosiery that has a particular compression at the ankle which is measured by mmHg or millimetres of mercury at the ankle.

(Represented by the yellow arrow on the diagram).

2. This compression is then graduated away from the ankle and gets gradually less towards the top of the hosiery and towards the toes.

(Represented by the Red waves which get thinner towards the top of the image).

3. The image right illustrates this, the orange arrows represent the compression at the ankle and the blur gradient represents the compression getting less towards the top of the leg and towards the toes.



## What can different compressions be used for?

### 1. Extra Light Support

EXTRA LIGHT  
UP TO 14 MMHG

All products with a compression value of 14 mmHg at the ankle or less.

Very Light is the level for all our products that have a very low classification and may be used as either preventing more complex medical issues or just to provide a simple day to day support for those with or wanting to avoid have swollen and tired legs.

### 2. Light Support

LIGHT  
14 - 17 MMHG

All products that have a Compression at the ankle of between 14-17 mmHg.

Light Support hosiery has within its range of mmHg, British standard hosiery Class 1.

Products within this category may be of use in Preventing and or treating the following.

- a. Early or Developing Varicose vein
- b. Tired/ heavy aching legs

### 3. Moderate support

MODERATE  
18 - 24 MMHG

All products that have a Compression at the ankle of between 18-24 mmHg.

Moderate Support hosiery has within its range of mmHg, British standard hosiery Class 2 and European standard hosiery Class 1 and also various stockings and support socks.

Products within this category may be of use in Preventing and or treating the following.

- a. Medium to Gross(Severe) varicose vein
- b. Spider veins
- c. Minor Leg ulcers
- d. DVT in early stages
- e. Early Lymphoedema

### 4. Firm Support

FIRM  
23 - 35 MMHG

All products that have a Compression at the ankle of between 25-35 mmHg.

Firm Support hosiery has within its range of mmHg, British standard hosiery Class 3 and European standard hosiery Class 2.

Products within this category may be of use in preventing and or treating the following.

- a. Severe Varicose Vein
- b. DVT in advanced stages
- c. Moderate to severe Lymphoedema

### 5. Extra Firm Support

EXTRA FIRM  
OVER 35 MMHG

All products that have a Compression at the ankle of between 34-45 mmHg.

Moderate Support hosiery has within its range of mmHg, European standard hosiery Class 3.

Products within this category are to be used with great care as the compression level is very high. However under proper medical supervision the products may be used in Preventing and or treating the following.

- a. Severe Varicose Vein
- b. DVT in advanced stages
- c. Severe Lymphoedema
- d. Elephantitis