

# Oedema management: self-adhesive compression wrapping

## Information for patients

This sheet provides you with information about self-adhesive compression wrapping to help reduce swelling in your fingers or thumb. If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your hand therapist.

### What is oedema?

Oedema is swelling in the hand because of injury or trauma. It is caused by disruptions of fluid movement in the body. It is part of the normal inflammatory process during healing.

### What is self-adhesive compression wrapping?

This is a self-adherent, latex-free elastic wrap. It can be applied around your affected finger or hand to help gently push the swelling out of the affected area. It is used to reduce acute, soft swelling. It can also help to reduce pain as it provides a circumferential pressure to the finger.

### How is it applied?

1. Application steps:
  - a. Begin from the fingertip, and in an overlapping diagonal pattern, go down the finger towards the palm of your hand.
  - b. Overlap half of the previous layer with the new layer.
  - c. Do not leave gaps in between layers when applying.
  - d. Always ensure you wrap from the tip of your finger to the base, and never the other way around.
2. Do not stretch the wrapping to more than 50% of its capacity. It will not slip or loosen with time. It must be wrapped to be comfortable immediately after application.
3. Gently mould the wrapping to your finger once you have covered the entire length to ensure it is firmly applied.



4. Ensure that you never cover the tip of your finger or thumb with the wrapping. This is so you can check the tip of your finger or thumb for any changes in circulation or sensation.

## Other useful tips

- Check your finger regularly for any signs of inflammation, discolouration or circulation issues. If the fingertip turns bright red or white and cold compared to your other fingertips, remove and consult your therapist.
- Do not apply the wrapping to an open wound.
- If you use wrapping at night, put it on 15 minutes before you go to bed. This gives you time to make sure it is not too tight before you go to sleep.
- You can re-use each piece of wrapping multiple times or until it stops sticking to itself.
- If there are any signs of an allergic reaction, remove the wrapping and consult your local GP or A&E.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about the oedema in your hand, please contact Hand Therapy on 020 3299 8220 or 01689 866660 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm) or on [kch-tr.therapyappts@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.therapyappts@nhs.net).

## Sharing your information

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has partnered with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust through the King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas' hospitals. King's College Hospital and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trusts share an electronic patient record system, which means information about your health record can be accessed safely and securely by health and care staff at both Trusts. For more information visit [www.kch.nhs.uk](http://www.kch.nhs.uk).

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: 020 3299 3601

Email: [kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net)

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND

Tel: 01689 863252

Email: [kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net)

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email [kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net)**