Intermittent Pneumatic Compression (IPC) for lymphoedema Lymphassist
Home or clinic use

Introduction
You have been booked for a course of Intermittent Pneumatic Compression (IPC) which is sometimes referred to as lymphassist. This leaflet will help you understand what the treatment involves and how it is administered.

IPC (lymphassist) involves a measured cycle of treatment administered by the Hydroven 12 pump using the lymphassist cycle. The IPC (lymphassist) is designed to mimic manual lymphatic drainage, a skin stretching technique which encourages fluid to be reabsorbed and tissues to be softened. The aim of the treatment is to reshape or soften your limb tissues (arm or leg) and improve the skin condition.

What does IPC involve?
Attached to the IPC (lymphassist) machine is an inflatable garment which will be applied to your arm or leg. The garment is attached to the Hydroven 12 pump via a series of inflating tubes and the pressures and times are set by the therapist. The pressures cannot be changed by the patient.

When the machine is switched on it will start to inflate the garment from fingers or toes upwards. When it has reached the top of the arm or leg it will then start compressing at regular intervals, working down the arm or leg. This is repeated for approximately 1 hour or for a length of time decided by your therapist. The treatment will usually consist of 2 cycles which will last approximately 45 minutes in total.

If you are using the machine at home the treatment can be carried out at any time of the day that is convenient to you.
What does lymphassist feel like?

When receiving IPC (lymphassist) you should feel comfortable and **not experience any of the following:**

- Pain
- Sensation changes
- Numbness
- Breathlessness
- The limb should not become hot
- Cause you to cough or change your normal breathing pattern
- Induce nausea or vomiting.

If you experience any of the above symptoms please stop the treatment and contact Gloucestershire Lymphoedema Service.

Following your treatment, you may experience that you pass urine more frequently and could feel tired for a short time, this is not abnormal.

**How to undertake your IPC treatment?**

Read and sign the checklist before each treatment.

- Complete the checklist provided by the Gloucestershire Lymphoedema Service Clinic. The checklist will be kept with your notes so please return with the machine if it is on loan.
- Do your Simple Lymphatic Drainage (SLD) as you have been shown by your therapist.
- Sit on a chair, couch or bed and remove your garment (stocking or sleeve) if you wear one
- Place stockinet over your limb
- Place your limb into the IPC (lymphassist) garment
- Switch the machine on
- Following completion of time the machine will stop automatically (approximately 60 minutes or as set by your therapist). You may then switch the machine off.

If you are using the IPC (lymphassist) at home you will be shown how to use the pump and given further information by the Gloucestershire Lymphoedema Service Clinic.
Will I be able to work whilst having treatment?

If you are receiving your IPC (lymphassist) as a continuation of treatment following a course of bandaging or as a standalone treatment, you should still be able to work. The treatment will not affect your daily activities and should not reduce your range of movements or limit your abilities.

If you feel you are unable to attend work, you need to discuss this with your employer and/or your GP.

What happens after my course of treatment?

Following a course of IPC (lymphassist) your treatment will be reviewed by a therapist and a plan of further follow up requirements will be discussed with you. You will continue to receive follow up appointments as usual.

Contact information

Should you have any questions or queries at any time do not hesitate to contact us.

Gloucestershire Macmillan Lymphoedema Service
Wheatstone, 2 North Upton Lane, Barnwood,
Gloucester, GL4 3TA
Tel: 0300 422 8750
Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4.30pm

Further information

You may like to contact the following organisations for further information:

British Lymphology Society
The Garth House, Rushy Lock, Tadpole Bridge
Buckland Marsh, Near Faringdon
Oxfordshire, SN7 8RF
Tel: 01452 790 178
Email: info@thebls.com