Graduated compression stockings

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Abstract

Aim
To evaluate the effect of GCS on the venous blood flow in the lower limbs and the practical aspects of use.

Methodology
200 adult patients undergoing orthopaedic surgery were randomised into 5 groups to receive two different types of GCS in knee and thigh length. The 5th group did not wear stockings. Plethysmography was used to measure venous flow. Subjective opinion on comfort and use of the GCS was recorded.

Results
Plethysmography showed there was a highly significant increase in venous capacitance and venous outflow with all types of GCS. Thigh length GCS had significantly more wrinkles and more associated discomfort compared to knee length. Fifty percent of patients were not able to manage use of the GCS alone.

Conclusion
The more comfortable and less costly knee length GCS used either alone or with other methods of prophylaxis should be used.