Wrapping the Leg to Control Lymphedema

These step-by-step instructions were created for you to use as a guide on how to wrap your leg. This wrapping method, to control swelling caused by lymphedema, is called multi-layer, low stretch bandaging. A physical therapist will teach you this process.

Materials you will need:

Here are some basic guidelines:

- All bandages should be wrapped just tight enough to stay in place. Do not “tug” on the bandages or stretch them while wrapping.

- Bandages should be held in place with tape, not metal clips. Do not put tape on your skin. It is important to protect your skin from irritation and scratches.

- Wrapping the bandages too tightly can cause pain, numbness or tingling in the leg or foot. **If you ever have pain, a loss of feeling or tingling, then you should remove the bandages.** Do not re-wrap your leg until after the pain, loss of feeling, or tingling is gone.

- When you are done, the bandage should feel firm, not tight or too loose.

- Change the direction with each bandage you use.
The number of bandages you will use depends on the length and size of your leg and how much compression is needed. Your physical therapist will tell you how many bandages you will need to wrap your leg.

Instructions for Wrapping Your Leg

Step 1:
Pull on the large stockinette from the foot up to the top of your leg. The stockinette should end about 2 inches from the top of your leg.

Step 2:
Wrap the fluffy padding around the foot and leg.

Step 3:
You will use several bandages to wrap the foot and up your leg. Change the direction with each bandage you use.
- Take the smallest width brown bandage and start wrapping by anchoring the bandage just above the ankle.
- Wrap around the outside of the ankle and heel, moving down the foot to your toes.
• Wrap the bandage back up from the base of your toes to the bottom of your calf. Tape the end to hold it in place.

• The bandage should cover the fluffy padding completely. Do not wrap your ankle too many times in order to prevent problems with movement.

• Take the next brown bandage. Begin wrapping your leg in a circular pattern from the bottom up, overlapping at least half of the bandage.

• Keep wrapping the leg until the bandage has ended. It should stop around the upper calf, just below the knee. Tape the end to hold it in place.

• Take another brown bandage and start with an anchor wrap below the knee. Cross the bandage behind the knee and make an anchor above the knee. Cross back behind the knee again to below the knee. Use the rest of the bandage to fill in the knee area.

• Keep wrapping up the leg until you reach the top of your leg. You may need to use more than one bandage to wrap your leg. Tape the end to hold it in place.
Other instructions you may be given:

Follow these additional instructions only if your physical therapist puts a check in the box.

- **Add foam to your bandaging**
  
  - Sometimes foam may be added to your bandaging. The foam will be cut to fit the shape of your leg or placed in a small fabric bag. Your physical therapist will show you how to use the foam.
  
  - Foam should not be placed directly on your skin. The foam should be put between the layers of the bandages.
  
  - If you use foam, make sure you change the location where they are placed each day. This will help lower the risk of irritation to your skin.

- **Bandage your toes**
  
  - Sometimes you may need to wrap your toes. This would be done after you put on your stockinette and before you wrap your foot and leg with the fluffy padding.
  
  - Take the small white bandage labeled Toeband and unroll the bandage.
  
  - Wrap the bandage around the middle of your foot to hold the bandage in place.
  
  - Begin with your big toe and wrap in a diagonal pattern to the nail bed and back down to the base of your big toe. Wrap the bandage around the foot.
- Bandage the remaining three toes in any order using the same pattern described for your big toe. Between each toe wrap, wrap the bandage around your foot to better hold the bandage in place.

- If there is bandaging left over, wrap it around the foot and tape the end.

Physical Therapist: _________________________________________

Phone Number: ___________________________________________

The Toeband completely wrapped and held with tape.