

## Compression stockings do not reduce DVT risk in stroke patients

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Compression stockings are not effective in reducing the risk of DVT in stroke patients, latest study results suggest.

UK researchers studied more than 2,500 acute stroke patients from 64 centres in the UK, Italy and Australia. All were admitted to hospital within one week of having a stroke, and all were immobile.

All the patients received routine care, and half also received thigh-length graduated compression stockings. Patients were then given an ultrasound of both legs seven to 10 days after the stockings were applied, and again after 25 to 30 days.

The researchers found that wearing compression stockings had no significant impact on whether a patient developed a DVT - 10% of those who wore stockings developed a clot, compared to 10.5% of those who did not.

However, they said that ulcers, blisters, skin breaks and skin tissue death were significantly more common in patients who wore compression stockings than in those given routine care only.

Lead study author Martin Dennis, from the University of Edinburgh's division of clinical neurosciences, called for a review of stroke guidelines which currently recommend the use of compression stockings.

'In this study we have shown conclusively that compression stockings do not work for stroke patients. Given that most national guidelines recommend stockings in at least some patients, the results of our study will affect the treatment of millions of patients each year,' he said online in [The Lancet](#).

'Abandoning this ineffective and sometimes uncomfortable treatment will free up significant health resources - both funding and nurse time - which might be better used to help stroke patients,' he added.

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