

AN INTERVIEW WITH:

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What are the benefits of prescribing a pneumatic compression device for a patient?

When we think about cost effectiveness of using a pump we know from published studies that there is a reduction in cellulitis,^{1,2} there is an improvement in quality of life³ for the patient, and there is a large reduction in hospital stays.² This actually saves more money than the cost of the pump so it's worth getting a pump. Again, you're empowering your patient to take care of themselves at home.

How should I evaluate my patient for a pneumatic compression device?

When I think about using a pump for my patients, the first thing I want to know about my patient is do they have any signs or symptoms that they have excess fluid in a body part. So I first do my physical exam and I assess whether their limbs are heavy, whether their abdomen is heavy, whether their buttocks are heavy. And then we have a discussion:

"is there pain in your limb?"

"do your limbs feel heavy when you move them?"

"have you noticed changes in your skin?"

"are your clothes not fitting quite as well?"

"at the end of the day are your shoes tight?"

If any of those are positive, that's when I consider getting them a pump. I usually do this at the very first visit because, again, I'm the type of physician who wants to empower their patients to take care of themselves at home, so why not give them as many tools as possible to keep themselves healthy at home?

Why should I choose to work with Tactile Medical?

When I prescribe a pump for my patients, I am really lucky that I have Tactile Medical on my side because I am super busy, I have reps that are available to me at all times by text or by email, they come to my clinic and I sign prescriptions. They really provide a global help to each and every one of my patients and I'm very thankful for them and they really save a lot of my time.

What is the process for ordering a pneumatic compression device for a patient?

If I had a colleague that wasn't really sure how to prescribe a pump or if they just were uncomfortable and didn't feel they knew enough about it, I would suggest one, that they get in touch with Tactile Medical and got some education; but at the same time it's so easy to order a pump. There's a form, you check off boxes and you know your patient better than anybody else so you're the best one to check off those boxes, and you fax it in or turn it in to your rep, and the magic begins...

1. Karaca-Mandic P, Hirsch AT, Rockson SG, Ridner SH. The cutaneous, net clinical, and health economic benefits of advanced pneumatic compression devices in patients with lymphedema. *JAMA Dermatol.* 2015;151(11):1187-93.
2. Lerman M, Gaebler JA, Hoy S, Izhakoff J, Gullett L, Niecko T, Karaca-Mandic P, O'Donnell T, Rockson SG. Health and economic benefits of advanced pneumatic compression devices in patients with phlebolymphe²ma. *J. Vasc Surg.* Published online: June 15, 2018.
3. Blumberg SN, Berland T, Rockman C, et al. Pneumatic compression improves quality of life in patients with lower-extremity lymphedema. *Ann Vasc Surg.* 2016 Jan 1;30:40-44.