

Applying a Stump Shrinker- Instructions

Stump shrinkers are used to reduce, prevent or control swelling (edema) in the below knee residual limb. They are designed to fit snugly and apply pressure to the soft tissues of the stump.



The shrinker can be applied over dressings as necessary. Dressings should be thin (i.e. a 4x4 opened) in order that they will not affect the pressure of the shrinker (like a rock in a shoe).

It is important that this pressure be greatest at the end (distally) and gradually lessens towards the thigh (proximally). If the shrinker is loose at the lower end (distally) then the tighter area higher (proximally) can stall circulation and actually increase swelling (edema).

Turn the shrinker inside out and stretch it open to contact the end of the stump. This should minimize any tension on the suture line.



Stretch the lower half of the shrinker firmly up towards the knee. Then let the material relax. This should ensure maximum compression at the end (distally).

The top (proximal) half of the shrinker can now be pulled up into position. This should not be stretched as much as the lower half.

The shrinker will tend to slide down and should be checked regularly. Whenever possible, make certain the shrinker is in its proper position.



Stump shrinkers, like ace wraps, should apply even pressure that gradually lessens at the top (proximally). They should always extend past the knee to minimize window edema at the knee. Most amputations are the result of poor or otherwise compromised circulation. In some cases, even light pressure can cause skin breakdown especially over thinly padded bony prominences like the patella or cut end of the tibia. If redness or other signs of excessive pressure are noticed, discontinue use and contact the physician or prosthetist.