

# Prosthetic Limb Shrinkers



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- A shrinker is an elastic sock which is rolled onto the residual limb following an amputation.
- A shrinker provides compression pressure to the limb as a way to reduce swelling.
- Shrinkers may be used alone or in combination with elastic bandages or Flo-Tech's.
- Always follow specific instructions given by your doctor and practitioner.
- Prosthetic shrinkers come in 2 styles:

1. Style for below the knee amputees



2. Style for above knee amputees



## Why Wear a Shrinker?

It is important to reduce swelling of the residual limb following surgery, so the incision site does not break open. Then after healing, it remains important to continue wearing the shrinker to reduce swelling. Swelling makes it more difficult to wear a prosthesis.

## How to Wear the Shrinker

- If your limb is very sensitive, it will be more comfortable to stretch the shrinker as it is being put on. This can be done by having someone help you and using 2 pairs of hands.
- A shrinker is generally worn most of the day and night as tolerated. Ideally, the shrinker is worn anytime you are not wearing your prosthesis.
- Make sure to wear your shrinker at least 8 hours before seeing your prosthetist to ensure proper assessment at your appointment.
- The shrinker needs to be pulled up tightly against the end of your residual limb.
- The first layer against your skin needs to be pulled up higher than the second layer for proper wear.

## Precautions

- \*\* If you find any areas of concern or have questions, contact your practitioner or doctor before wearing your shrinker.
- \*\* If your limb becomes painful, cold or numb while wearing the shrinker, remove the shrinker and consult your practitioner.
  - Wear a clean shrinker every day. **Do not** wear shrinkers for several days before washing, it is not good for the shrinkers or for your skin.
  - Make sure the shrinker is smooth and wrinkle free on your residual limb.
  - If the shrinker is no longer tight (either from being stretched out or your limb volume has decreased) you need new shrinkers. Talk with your practitioner to get replacement shrinkers.
  - Inspect your shrinkers for any worn areas, thin areas, rips, tears, or holes. If found, immediately contact your practitioner.
  - Wash shrinkers per the directions from the manufacturer, usually with hypoallergenic soap and water.