



New Amputee Guide

PREPARATION FOR FITTING A PROSTHESIS

In general the earlier a prosthesis is fitted the better it is for the amputee. One of the most difficult problems facing the amputee and the treatment team is edema, or swelling of the limb, allowing for the accumulation of fluids. Edema will be present to some extent in all cases, and it makes fitting of the prosthesis difficult, but certain measures can be taken to reduce the amount of edema.

The use of a rigid dressing can control edema, but this practice is not that commonly used anymore. Elastic bandages and special elastic shrinker socks are now more commonly used to control edema.

The limb should be bandaged constantly, but the bandage should be changed every four to six hours. It must never be kept in place for more than 12 hours without re-bandaging. If throbbing should occur, the bandage must be removed and rewrapped.

Special elastic "shrinker socks" are available for use instead of elastic bandages, and while not considered by some to be as effective as a properly applied bandage, a shrinker sock is better than a poorly applied elastic bandage. Whether an elastic bandage or a shrinker sock is used, it should be removed at least three times daily and the limb should be massaged vigorously for 10-15 minutes. The bandage or sock must be reapplied immediately after the massage.

BANDAGING TECHNIQUE



1

Start with the bandage held in place on the inside of the thigh just above the knee and unroll the bandage so that it is laid diagonally down the outer side of the limb while maintaining about two-thirds of the maximum stretch in the bandage.



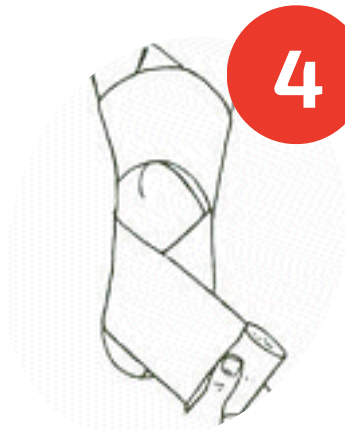
2

Bringing the bandage over the inner end of the limb and diagonally up the outer side of the limb.



3

Bringing the bandage under the back of the knee, continue over the upper part of the kneecap and down under the back of the knee.



4

Bring the bandage diagonally down the back of the limb and around over the end of the limb. Continue up the back of the limb to the starting point on the inside of the thigh and repeat the sequence in a manner so that the entire limb is covered by the time the roll is used up. The end of the bandage is held in place with the special clips that are provided. It is important that the tightest part of the bandage be at the end of the limb.