

# Compression Cryotherapy Treatment Devices

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## POLICY

- Submission for reimbursement for compression cryotherapy have been accompanied by justifications that indicate reduction in venous thromboembolism, reduction in swelling, improved rehab, and reduction in pain.
- The occurrence of venous thrombosis in the upper extremity and is rare following shoulder surgery(1). The incidence of post-operative VTE (venous thromboembolism) in areas other than the operative extremity is also relatively low (2). There are no studies to date documenting that post-operative use of compression cryotherapy is of benefit in preventing these events. There are studies demonstrating variable benefits of cryotherapy on pain and swelling ranging from no benefit to modest short-term benefit (3,4). There is no evidence to support that compression cryotherapy used post-operatively on the shoulder reduces the incidence of lower extremity VTE (venous thromboembolism)
- Official Disability Guidelines do not recommend compression cryotherapy for the shoulder based on expense and lack of evidence to support superiority over standard ice packs (5).
- Chesapeake Employer's Insurance may consider cryotherapy devices without compression for reimbursement on a case-by-case basis, however, compression cryotherapy devices would be considered not medically necessary and ineligible for reimbursement following shoulder surgery.
- Compression cryotherapy following knee arthroplasty has been shown in some studies to reduce post operative pain medication use in the short term compared to cryotherapy alone (7)
- Intermittent compression devices for the lower extremity are not recommended for home use per ODG (5). Further, benefit of post-operative intermittent compression requires near continuous use for 72 hours post-operatively leading to non-compliance.
- Use of cryotherapy may be considered for reimbursement in select cases involving complex knee procedures. Use of compression cryotherapy is generally considered not medically necessary as the evidence to support the benefit of the compression component is limited. However, compression cryotherapy may be considered for reimbursement in select cases following complex knee surgery for the potential benefit of reduced opioid use (9).

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