



CLEANING FLOWTRON IPC GARMENTS

Q. Can I clean a Flowtron® DVT Prophylaxis Garment?

A. Flowtron Garments are designed and registered as single-patient use, disposable, medical devices and, as such, are not designed for bedside cleaning, soaking, machine-washing, hand washing or otherwise cleansing within the healthcare facility.

Once a medical device enters the patient environment the level of bioburden will increase¹ and, even when visibly clean, items that are in contact with the patient will carry organisms that might be considered pathogenic¹. Furthermore, if garments are visibly soiled with blood or body fluids, the risk of cross contamination is increased and simple cleansing cannot ensure adequate decontamination. For this reason ArjoHuntleigh formally recommend that garments contaminated with biological fluids be discarded.

However, clinicians are often called upon to make pragmatic decisions, which fall outside of these recommendations. If this is the case, it may be possible to 'spot' cleanse lightly soiled garments using a damp cloth moistened with a mild soap or disinfectant solution, but the clinician must judge whether this is appropriate and also ensure this is in concordance with their own health, safety and disinfection policy. Unfortunately, as the *Flowtron* garments are not designed for reuse, ArjoHuntleigh is unable to recommend specific cleansing agents nor can the Company guarantee the fabric will not be adversely affected by the wide-range of solutions chosen.

For incontinent patients, calf garments may be preferred over thigh garments; these will continue provide a proven level of prophylaxis while avoiding patient discomfort and distress².

Please refer to the User Instructions for more information regarding the use of *Flowtron* DVT Prophylaxis Garments; copy can also be found on **www.ArjoHuntleigh.com**

- 1: Tweed C, Wigglesworth N. Re-using intermittent pneumatic compression garments designed for single-patient use is a potential source of cross infection. Journal of Infection Prevention. 2009: 10(4): 128-133
- $\hbox{2: Calf versus thigh compression: ArjoHuntleigh literature review. DVT.CL.34.0.GB-INT.0}\\$

These FAQ's have been developed to answer common questions which arise during clinical practice and in the market place when clinical evidence is scarce. It is important to consider the holistic care of the patient and use clinical judgement making decisions based on the answers. If you cannot find an answer for which you are looking, please email karen.milton@arjohuntleigh.com with your question(s) and we will endeavour to provide an answer and make it available to help educate others.

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