

The Importance of Compression Garments

After Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery

Your guide to healing well and getting the best possible results

Compression garments are not optional extras — they are a critical part of your recovery and your results. Think of them as your body's best friend in the weeks following surgery. Wearing your garment correctly and consistently can make a significant difference to how you heal, how you look, and how quickly you feel like yourself again.

✦ Facelift & Neck Lift — Facial Compression



After a facelift or neck lift, you will be provided with a facial compression garment — often called a chin strap or facial wrap. It may feel a little unusual at first, but it is doing an incredibly important job.

› **Why it matters:** During a facelift, the surgeon lifts and repositions the underlying tissues and skin. The compression garment holds everything gently in place while your body heals, ensuring the tissues adhere correctly and the skin reattaches smoothly.

› **Nerve endings:** Compression also plays a vital role in supporting the thousands of tiny nerve endings that have been disturbed during surgery. Gentle, consistent pressure helps these nerve endings settle and reconnect properly, reducing the risk of prolonged numbness or tingling.

- › **Swelling and bruising:** Wearing your garment reduces swelling significantly, which in turn means less bruising, faster healing, and a more natural-looking result.
- › **How long to wear it:** You should expect to wear your facial compression garment for a minimum of 6 weeks. For the first 2 weeks, wear it as close to 24 hours a day as possible, removing only to wash. From weeks 3–6, night-time wear is often recommended. Your surgeon will give specific guidance for your procedure.

⚠ Do not remove your facial garment early, even if you feel fine. The healing happening beneath the skin continues long after you feel recovered on the surface.

👙 Tummy Tuck & Mummy Makeover — Body Compression



A tummy tuck (abdominoplasty) or mummy makeover involves significant reshaping of the abdominal area, often including muscle repair. A body compression garment is absolutely essential for both your comfort and your outcome.

› **Supports the repair:** After muscle repair, the compression garment acts like an external support structure, holding the repaired muscles in position while they heal and strengthen.

› **Reduces fluid build-up:** Post-surgical fluid (seroma) is a common risk after tummy tuck surgery. Consistent compression dramatically reduces this risk by preventing fluid from pooling in the spaces left by surgery.

- › **Shapes your results:** The garment actively helps contour your new shape during the healing period. Wearing it consistently gives you the best possible long-term result.
- › **Manages swelling:** Swelling after a tummy tuck can be substantial and may last several months. Compression is the single most effective thing you can do to manage it.
- › **How long to wear it:** Plan to wear your body compression garment for 6–8 weeks minimum. The first 2–3 weeks should be as close to full-time as possible. Many patients continue wearing it for comfort well beyond this period.

💡 Always have a second garment available so you can wash one while wearing the other. A fresh, clean garment is more comfortable and more hygienic during recovery.

📌 Breast Surgery — The Right Bra Matters Enormously



Whether you've had a breast reduction, breast lift, or breast augmentation, what you wear against your skin in the weeks following surgery has a direct impact on your healing and your results.

› **After breast reduction or lift:** A soft, front-fastening medical bra is ideal. The hospital will provide an initial surgical bra as part of your care, but I strongly recommend picking up a front-zip medical bra from Kmart before you travel — they are under \$20 and absolutely invaluable.

› **Front fastening only:** This applies to arm surgery patients too. You must not reach behind your back to do up a bra clasp — this movement puts unnecessary strain on healing tissues and incisions. Front zip or front clip only.

› **Keep it fresh:** Change your bra regularly during recovery. A clean, fresh bra reduces the risk of infection, keeps the skin comfortable, and supports the garment's function.

› **How long to wear it:** A supportive surgical bra should be worn day and night for the first 4–6 weeks following breast surgery, removing only to wash. Your surgeon will advise when you can return to regular bras.

⚠️ If you have had any breast augmentation — NEVER wear a bra with an underwire or metal support during your recovery. Underwires can press directly on implants or healing tissue, distort the implant position, and cause serious complications. Soft cup, wire-free bras only until your surgeon gives the all-clear.

📅 General Compression Wear Timeline

Weeks 1–2	Wear your garment as close to 24 hours a day as possible. Remove only to wash.
Weeks 3–4	Continue full-time wear during the day. Night-time wear still strongly recommended.
Weeks 5–6	Night-time wear and during activity. Follow your surgeon's specific advice.
Week 6+	Gradual reduction as advised. Many patients continue longer for comfort and best results.

✅ Quick Reminders

- › Your hospital will supply your initial compression garment — it is included in your bill
- › Buy a front-zip medical bra from Kmart before you travel (under \$20)
- › No back-fastening bras after breast or arm surgery
- › No underwired or metal-support bras after breast augmentation — ever during recovery
- › Always have a spare garment so one can be washed
- › When in doubt, keep it on — you will never regret wearing it too long
- › If you wanted to buy a spare contact <https://www.sculpturegarments.com/> they are a NZ company who make compression garments for many of the NZ and Australian hospitals.

