**Compression Garments**

Compression garments have been used for many years to speed up recovery. The garments place pressure on the muscles which stimulates blood flow to enable recovery to occur. But are the local stores compression garments really effective?

Many companies utilise the typical small, medium and large size range; however, every individual’s body type is completely different. Although two people may fit the ‘medium’ category, they may have substantial differences in body structure. One may have small calves and large quadriceps and the other may have small quadriceps and large calves. As a result, they will not receiving the same level of compression at the various points of the lower legs when wearing compression leggings.

**How can we overcome this?**

Wearing compression garments for 8-24 hours is the optimal duration and so the level of compression has been investigated during this time. The results demonstrate that 8 and 12 mmHg elicit greater recovery over 48 hours compared to no compression. Therefore, when searching for compression garments you should ensure to order the sizes based on the circumference of the body area you are searching to provide compression for. This way you can receive this 8 and 12 mmHg pressure relative to your body size for optimal recovery. Additionally, many companies won’t state their level of compression due to their ability to mass produce the products for smaller costs and greater profit margins. Alternatively, there are options to buy tailor made compression garments. The downfall to this is that they are very costly (over £200 in most cases!) to be individual tailored and so be sure they are worth buying before you make this investment.

**Is it worth me buying compression garments?**

Garments are only needed if you frequently train and need rapid recovery. This will allow you to train at a higher intensity and with less discomfort on a daily basis. However, if you only train once or twice a week, your body has enough time to sufficiently naturally recover before your next bout of exercise.

A further downfall to compression garments is that the optimal materials are not the most comfortable or aesthetically pleasing. Therefore, if you want to be comfortable and in trend, the best compression gear available is not for you.