



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
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HARMONIZED SYSTEM
REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE

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(+ Annex)

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O. Fr.

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POSSIBLE AMENDMENT OF THE NOMENCLATURE AND THE EXPLANATORY NOTE
TO HEADING 61.15 (PROPOSAL BY THE EC)

(Item III.B.10 on Agenda)

I. BACKGROUND

1. On 23 January 2003, the Secretariat received the following note from the EC concerning a possible amendment to the text of heading 61.15 and the corresponding Explanatory Note.
2. In a letter dated 24 January 2003, the EC sent the Secretariat some additional technical information it had located on the Internet, which is reproduced in the Annex to this document.
3. The EC has also indicated that in its proposal the word "medical" ("médicaux") should be in square brackets, and that it would be willing to accept the deletion of this term if the Committee considered that it might be misleading in the context of other products classifiable elsewhere in the Nomenclature.

II. NOTE FROM THE EC

4. "The EC takes the view that the expression "stockings for varicose veins" in heading 61.15 is obsolete and confusing as these articles are used nowadays to treat not only varicose veins but also a number of vein and lymphatic problems causing swelling of the legs. In practice this expression has been replaced by "medical compression hosiery".
5. The EC therefore proposes that the expression "stockings for varicose veins" ("bas à varices") be replaced by "medical compression hosiery, e.g., stockings for varicose veins" ("bas médicaux de compression, par exemple bas à varices") in the wording of heading 61.15, and that a new subheading 61.15.30 be created for : "medical compression hosiery, e.g., stockings for varicose veins".

Note : Shaded parts will be removed when documents are placed on the WCO documentation database available to the public.

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6. A study carried out by the **Swedish** Administration has shown that the expression "stockings for varicose veins" is obsolete and that industry has replaced it by the expression "medical compression hosiery" and that there is a European standard (SS-ENV 12718) for such hosiery. It would appear that this hosiery is divided into five levels of compression measured at the ankle (see below). However, there is no scientific evidence that level A stockings can be classified as medical compression hosiery. It seems that only level 1 to 4 stockings will shortly be considered to be medical compression hosiery.

Level	Compression at ankle		Indications
	hPa	mm Hg	
A	13-19	10-14	Mild vein insufficiency (functional problems, incipient varicose veins)
1	20-28	15-21	Moderate vein insufficiency (varicose veins)
2	31-43	23-32	Severe vein insufficiency
3	45-61	34-46	Severe vein insufficiency
4	65 or over	49 or over	Lymphoedemia, elephantiasis

Proposal

7. Heading text and new subheading :

61.15 Panty hose, tights, stockings, socks and other hosiery, including [medical] compression hosiery (e.g., stockings for varicose veins) and footwear without applied soles, knitted or crocheted.

6115.30 - [Medical] compression hosiery (e.g., stockings for varicose veins)

8. The **EC** considers that the following amendments should also be made to the Explanatory Note to heading 61.15 :

Item 3

Delete the expression ", or for varicose veins".

New item 4

Insert the following new item 4 :

"4) [Medical] compression hosiery, e.g., stockings for varicose veins. These stockings have a compression at the ankle of at least 20 hPa (15mm Hg)."

Items 4 and 5 to be renumbered 5 and 6."

III. SECRETARIAT COMMENTS

9. Because this note from the **EC** arrived only recently, the Secretariat has reproduced it without comment.

IV. CONCLUSION

10. The Sub-Committee is invited to examine the proposal from the **EC** to amend the text of heading 61.15 and the corresponding Explanatory Note, as reproduced in paragraphs 7 and 8 above.

* * *



Plus™ Compression Hose

Available until a few years ago from Parke-Davis, Support Plus™ was a popular brand with a loyal customer base. Auto Control Medical is pleased to reintroduce the brand in fall 2001 with a broader selection than previously available, updated packaging and product improvements.

Are all support stockings the same?

No indeed! many major brands are simply elasticized stockings with generally the same compression the entire length of the garment, or even compression levels similar to regular stockings. All Support Plus™ products have the greatest compression exerted at the ankle, which then decreases gradually and sequentially the length of the leg. These pressures range from 15-20 mmHg for normal "street wear" type products to the heavier surgical weight in 20-30 and 30-40 mmHg for the relief of more serious leg and vein problems.

Who can benefit from Support Plus™ compression hosiery?

Anyone who

- Has some type of venous or circulatory disorder
- Is handicapped or confined to a bed or wheelchair
- Has varicose veins
- Spends long hours sitting or standing at his or her job
- During pregnancy



Contraindications?

Compression hosiery is specifically not recommended for people suffering from severe occlusive artery disease, skin infections or skin allergies. There may be others that should be identified by a physician

About Graduated Compression Hosiery



Prior to the introduction of medical support hosiery, the only relief available to patients suffering from venous and circulation disorders in the legs was surgery or injection therapy and compression bandages. These elastic bandages provided relief, but the process was complicated requiring the services of a physician or trained technician to ensure the proper pressure and application, and the bandages had to be replaced on a regular basis.

The first elastic stockings to be used in compression therapy, in the early '50s, were using latex as a stretch component. These were basic by today's standards, but provided welcome relief to patients suffering from circulation problems. The introduction of LYCRA® spandex by DuPont in 1959 allowed the industry to start producing more specialized types of garments, with a greater compression range.

Today, manufacturers have access to the latest electronic knitting technology and newest yarn developments to produce specialized compression garments. This modern technology, such as that used by Secret® Medi-Support®, made it possible to create a complete range of fashionable medical hosiery with controlled graduated compression.

Secret® Medi-Support® hosiery products, which are classified by Health Canada as Class I medical devices, are designed to provide optimum comfort and relief from swelling and leg circulation disorders. The "Firm" range of pantyhose and stockings is sheer and available in a full range of fashion colours, such that it is impossible to distinguish them from regular pantyhose and stockings. The socks are also available in a wide range of fashion colours and can be worn by men or women as casual wear or with business trousers or pants.
