



Personal Safety

Compression Garments Support Health Benefits

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The DRTV-fueled growth of the category is building a market for a range of fitness-oriented consumers.

Athletes, weekend warriors and others whose recreation and occupation contributes to joint and back pain have long used braces, wraps and sleeves for support and relief.

But it is only recently that a wide spectrum of retailers has benefited in the form of surging sales from a new generation of innovative compression garments backed by the educational and sales-driving power of direct-response TV marketing.

This new generation of compression garments showcases advanced materials—spotlighting in many cases the infusion of odor-fighting copper fibers— for optimum performance without sacrificing comfort.

Compression garments are known for providing muscle and circulatory support. Doctors often prescribe compression garments to help treat varicose veins; to avoid clots and thrombosis; to avoid blood pooling in extremities; and to treat low blood pressure.

Some studies indicate athletes using compression wear can run longer with less pain and recover faster. Many athletes and celebrities claim compression sleeves give them more energy, allowing muscles to work more efficiently and helping prevent injury while exercising.

Marketers driving the dramatic growth of As Seen On TV compression garments have looked to harness such athletic authenticity and credibility by enlisting well-known professional athletes as spokespeople appearing in infomercials and other marketing collateral.

Key to the DRTV-fueled growth of compression garments has been a shift in the marketing message behind such products from a clinical tone to a wellness lifestyle theme to which a cross-generational swath of active consumers can relate.

The DRTV renaissance of compression garments started with a few sleeves for knees and elbows. Their success stimulated the rapid extension of the compression category into back supports, socks, gloves and other garments that, along with updated iterations of the joint sleeves, anchor in-line departments at retail, As Seen On TV sections and a steady program of promotional features.

Displays of compression garments now are as likely to secure up-front placement in sporting goods stores and departments as they are to command a prominent presence in or near chain drug stores and pharmacy departments.

The awareness- and traffic-building boost from regularly updated DRTV spots for a continuing stream of new products has extended retail distribution of compression garments to supermarkets, home specialty stores, home centers, hardware stores, gift stores and other channels looking to benefit from the impulse-sales potential of such heavily advertised products.

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