

My Legs are So Incredibly Light

Secrets from a lead physician. From the operating room in Triemli to Mongolia. Heart surgeon and professor Michele Genoni reveals what he does to treat his swollen legs.



He's on his feet around the clock, walking up and down stairs, along lengthy hospital corridors and standing at the operating table for hours, where he has to be focused and alert. It's not good if blood starts to pool, causing swelling in the legs and feet. "In the evening

I was hardly able to fit into my shoes," says the head physician in the Department of Cardiac Surgery at Triemli Hospital in Zurich. "My legs were always heavy after long operations. They were so full, so thick. I just did not feel well after work. And it was getting worse all the time." That was 15 years ago.

"I remember well, showering down my legs with cold water every time I got home to make the swelling go down a bit. But the effects were short-lived; by morning it would be the same. It started all over again the next day."

Then, once at a surgeons' convention, came an eye-opening experience. "I stopped at a booth where they had compression stockings. The rep said those stockings would solve my very problem. Back then they only came in a rather drab-looking brown, not at all like the modern, high-tech ones they have today. People wore socks over them, even though the compression stockings were quite thick. I tried them out anyway. At first they seemed a bit tight, but they had an astounding effect. Right after I put them on my legs felt unbelievably light, and after standing at an operating table for hours on end I was able to run again, like when I was younger. What a great feeling that was."

Prof. Genoni started wearing the stockings outside work too, more and more. "Even while hiking in Mongolia last year. I bought a special kind made for athletic activities. It was like having a tailwind out there covering rough territory; although the sporty kind have slightly less compression than the medical product. If I'm not wearing the stockings, which really doesn't happen much, my legs start to hurt again in the evening. So there's no reason not to wear them."

Now nearly the entire cardiac team at Triemli Hospital wears compression stockings. You can't tell if somebody is wearing them, because they're as thin as regular socks. The compression socks of your grandmother's time have nothing

in common with today's new, modern versions. Even so, Prof. Genoni is certain: "I would never want to miss such a uniquely great feeling." |

Do you also experience heavy and tired legs?

Heavy, tired legs and leg swelling in the evenings can be a first sign of weakening veins. Hereditary predisposition and lack of exercise, due to sitting and standing activities, are among the most common risk factors for vein weakening. HIGHLIGHT compression stockings for women and HIGHLIGHT compression stockings for men help with gentle compression. The compression stockings will reduce evening leg swelling and support lighter legs, while slowing the advancement of vein problems. The HIGHLIGHT compression stockings can be purchased in select orthopaedic and medical supply stores, as well as in pharmacies.