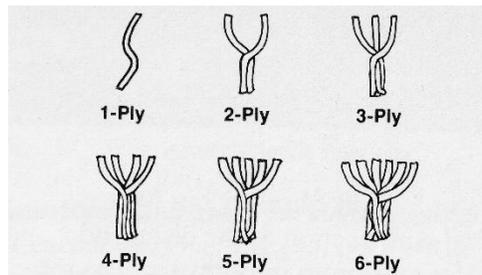


Prosthetic Socks

Many amputees wear prosthetic socks over the residual limb inside the socket of the prosthesis. Prosthetic socks are available in a variety of materials and thickness. Socks will protect the skin, absorb and/or wick perspiration from the residual limb, absorb friction, cushion impact, compensate for shrinkage or swelling of the residual limb, and provide a way to adjust the fit of the socket. To maintain the appropriate fit of the prosthesis as the residual limb changes in size, shape, and contour, different thicknesses of prosthetic socks are used. A prosthetic sock thickness or weight has been represented by the term “ply”. When more strands of yarn are knit into socks, they become progressively thicker and heavier. The increasing number of strands is referred to as “ply” (See figure below).



You will receive a supply of prosthetic socks with your prosthesis. The supply will be made up of a variety of thickness so you can manage your fit. Every time you put on the prosthesis you should know what thickness or ply you are wearing. If the socket feels loose, you may add a ply and if it feels tight, you might reduce a ply. In general, it is best to wear the appropriate ply sock fit with the least number of socks to achieve that fit. For example wear one 5-ply sock instead of one 3-ply sock and two 1-ply socks. Try to avoid wrinkles in your socks because they may cause irritation to your skin. Typically, a 5-ply sock has a green stripe on the top and a 3-ply sock has a yellow stripe on the top. This may vary depending on the manufacturer.

Prosthetic sheaths are also available for the below knee prosthesis wearer. Sheaths are made of thin nylon and are advantageous in wicking away moisture from the skin and reducing friction between the skin and the prosthesis.

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Wear clean socks and sheaths every day. On hot and humid days many people will put on fresh socks half way through the day. Do not wear socks for several days before washing them. It is not good for your skin or the prosthetic socks. Follow the washing instructions provided by the manufacture.



From left to right: sheath, 1-ply sock, 3-ply sock, 5-ply sock

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